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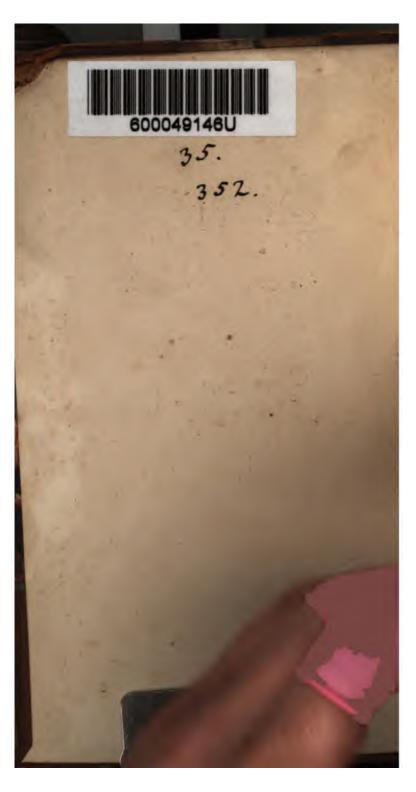
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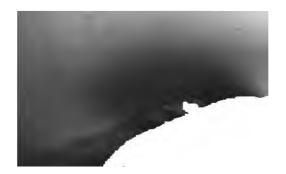
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VILLIERS.



LONDON:
Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES and Sons,
Duke-Street, Lambeth.

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VILLIERS:

A Tale

cos

THE LAST CENTURY.

"He may worthily, and with honour, bear the cinquefoil."

GUILIM.

VOLUME I.



LONDON:

WHITTAKER AND CO., AVE-MARIA LANE.

1835.

352.

TO ONE

IN WHOM TALENT AND INTEGRITY

ARE JOIMED WITH ALL

THE BEST QUALITIES OF THE HEART,

This Work

IS DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

I HOLD the idea of fatalism to be an absurdity.

The metaphysics of the Eighth Chapter, in the Third Volume, must partly be accepted as the unhealthy reasonings of a solitary and deserted man.

Nevertheless, I have endeavoured to show, in this fiction, that over the power of *circumstance* we have no control,—circumstance, tending from every hand towards one great centre, as regards each individual being of the world; although the acts and impulses of one man are secret from the other, and, in the inevitable effect these must have upon his fellow, most often unknown to himself.

Yet, in judging of its power, or in its application, how may not the wisest err!

Although the following tale was sketched a few years back, it is hoped that time has not destroyed whatever merit it may originally have possessed.

The chosen period of history, lying between the two famous efforts of the House of Stuart, has latterly been something overlooked and put aside, or remembered but with the associations of Walpole, Whig, and Tory; while, in the contemplation of stormy debates and recriminative charges, the political connection of this country with France during the Regency of Orleans, and the wars consequent upon the yearnings of George II. towards the Electorate of Hanover, are now but little thought of.

Without assuming to have put forth a purely historical novel (for the work is far from such), the Author merely premises that those events of history upon which he has touched, have been drawn from authentic sources. The hero of the tale must, nevertheless, be permitted to figure at times independently of the trammels of fact; and some of the actors who may be esteemed superfluous, must

" strut and fret their hour,"

albeit they are "seen no more;" since the mind cannot be for ever stretched to the top of its bent, even in the perusal of a work of fiction.

Should some apology be needed for the introduction of the wife of a certain minister whose title—at least the earldom—has been for ninety years extinct, it is comprehended in the circumstance of that nobleman having "died unmarried."

VILLIERS.

CHAPTER I.

Sham'st thou to show thy dangerous brow by night,
When evils are most free? O, then, by day
Where wilt thou find a covert dark enough
To mask thy monstrous visage? Lack none, Conspiracy;
Hide it in smiles and affability:
For if thou put'st thy native semblance on,
Not Erebus itself were dim enough
To hide thee from prevention.

JULIUS CASAR.

It was at the close of a gloomy day in December, 1718, that an English gentleman, mounted upon a powerful horse of his own country, rode out of Paris at the Barrière de Passy, attended by a single groom. The appearance of the sky was lowering, the wind blew in heavy gusts from the

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westward, and the large rain-drops that began to fall portended a night of storm; but the horse-man, as he cleared the suburbs, and carracioled his steed, thought lightly of the weather, rejoicing as he did in the consciousness of freedom from a daily routine of dry and irksome business. The hunting-field or the road had been his element, rather than the diplomatic closet; and a youth of reckless, though independent adventure, had ill seconded very able talents to fit for a maturer life of close application to serious affairs, one who was early taught to reject them as the probable means of future subsistence.

Facing the wind and coming rain, as an old enemy, whose powers were to be contemned rather than avoided, he fastened more securely his laced horseman's cloak about his person, and rode swiftly forward; in hopes that, late, even, as he had been detained from setting out, the place of destination might still be reached that night at a good hour. This was a hunting-

seat of one of the French princes, not many leagues distance from Paris. Scarcely had he accomplished two of these when his progress was arrested by a confused mass of men and horses, and, what more particularly obstructed the road, a heavy travelling carriage, huge and cumbrous, which had broken down, and now lay in a hopeless state of wreck.

In the war of tongues, that of the postillion made itself heard above the rest, replying with all the energy and ire of his country to the objurgations of the travellers, who had contrived unhurt to extricate themselves from the vehicle. Our horseman took some little time to examine the party, aided by the doubtful gleam of a lamp which they had with them, and which showed it to consist of three gentlemen and a servant, the latter of whom having tied his horse to one of those in harness, was now busily engaged in searching for some lost package, that the anxiety displayed by his masters bespoke as being of the last importance.

The exhortations of the superiors and replies of the domestic were made in Spanish; but an occasional reproach to the postillion for an accident which it was not his to prevent, rung out in as good French as the comprehensive vocabulary of abuse proper to that language will admit. The pronunciation of the second traveller also was but little tainted with a Spanish accent, yet decidedly; the third, in silence had seized the lamp from the postillion, and set himself seriously to examine into the extent of their misfortune.

Our cavalier's professions of service were gladly and politely accepted, and his groom ordered to lend assistance. The damage, however, being pronounced as irremediable, without mechanical aid, the servant withdrew a little from the crowded mass, and looked quietly on, awaiting fresh directions. At this moment the light was extinguished by a sudden gust of wind; and an interjection which, however inelegant, was so perfectly English as not for a moment to be

mistaken, arose from the centre of the confused knot. The familiar sound was not lost upon the ear of the horseman; but with that intuitive reserve which guards the breast of an Englishman abroad from communion with his countrymen, he avoided speaking in his own tongue, and reined his beast further from the scene. As he did so, the horse's feet struck upon some round substance, which rolled to a short distance, and was picked up by the rider, who dismounted for the purpose. It proved to be the lost treasure, a small valise, so light as to creete surprise that it should be in such a manner esteemed by the owner, as the immoderate joy he displayed at its recovery would imply.

The rain was now falling fast, the darkness nearly impenetrable, and the whole situation of the benighted travellers forlorn to the last degree, for they were a league from the nearest town where available assistance could be proeured; but the heart of our horseman was hardened, and telling his man to mount, he put spurs to his steed, and left them to their fate. Before he had ridden a mile, his pace was again slackened, as he ruminated upon the late adventure, rendered more interesting by a consciousness of having not now for the first time seen the faces of the two Spaniards, as the lamp flashed its momentary light upon them. Occasionally stopping, or riding on, sometimes fast, and again relaxing into a walk, his movements manifested an indecision of purpose by no means common to him. He was near the town of Rambouillet, when a man rode up to his side, and, checking his tired horse, commenced a voluble discourse in the recognised tones of the postillion. The Englishman, whom we may here introduce as Mr. Villiers, was a man of the world; and, however he had avoided a contact with his countryman, showed no disposition to repel the communications of the more humble, though possibly not less self-important personage who now addressed him. Aware, as it appeared, that the gentleman and his attendant could be no others than the late spectators of the scene he had left, he proceeded to defend himself from all blame, as earnestly as if Mr. Villiers had accused him of a wilful concern in the accident, and with a manner that would at any other time have afforded much amusement. Highly affronted at the terms of abuse that had been so lavishly bestowed upon him by the Spaniards, he believed himself acting but with too great benevolence towards them, in riding thus for assistance to repair the misfortune, and speed them on their way; the livre or two in perspective not being, in his own mind, allowed to have any weight.

"The valise you picked up, monsieur, must have felt heavy, did it not?" demanded he.

"Light as a cheton!" said Villiers.

"Hai!" exclaimed the postillion, in a lengthened tone of surprise: "It must hold papers, then, that would be worth the notice of some dexterous garçons, whom they may yet meet on

"The stripling seemed glad to get it again," said Villiers, carelessly.

"Glad! yes, well he might be," replied the postillion; "but the elder Don was the most so. Diantre, I wish it had come under my foot!"

"What think you, monsieur, it could contain? Tenez, monsieur, vous etes honnête homme—it is worth an hundred thousand pistoles!" concluded he, with some mystery, as he edged his horse nearer to that of Villiers.

"You surprise me," exclaimed the latter. But how know you? You have not opened it?"

"Bah!" said the postillion, indignantly. "Monsieur, je suis homme d'honneur—comme vous," added he, bowing to Villiers, as the latter put a piece of money into his hand, to repair the unintentional affront. "The fool danced for joy as you rode away, taking you, monsieur, for no honest person, so glad was he to have got the valise out of your hands, as he would not have lost it, he said, for the sum I have named."

"Fool, indeed," responded Villiers; "for he did not perhaps know you to be the man of honour that I am sure you are!"

"Monsieur est très poli!" said the man with a bow; "Mais n'en parlons plus."

"You have an Englishman amongst them?"
said Villiers.

"Eh bien! oui. Mais nous voilà à Rambouillet!"

" Mais cet Anglais?"

"Sacre-je n'en sçais rien. Gros-Jean, qui ne s'avise jamais de parler que des G-d-n's. Mais, monsieur, voilà le Coq d'Or," concluded he, cracking his enormous whip, and riding up to the glimmering light of a miserable auberge, as he shouted "Hola!" with all his might.

Mr. Villiers believed he could not better do than call halt also; for the rain had penetrated through his cloak, and somewhat damped his ardour for the next day's chase; and moreover he had formed certain conclusions upon
what had presented itself to ear and eye since
he left Paris, that might have had a strong
influence in changing his determinations. He
followed the postillion, therefore, into the innyard, and having called for some refreshment,
such as it was, entered once more into conversation with his new acquaintance; but what the
subject may have been it were now idle to
demand. Certain it is, that when clear of the
gloomy inn-yard, and lost to the gaze of its
shrinking and comfortless tenants, he turned
his horse's head towards Paris.

Dashing on through the storm, he passed the still unremoved vehicle, whose owners in a mournful silence now sought temporary shelter by its side, while they patiently awaited their postillion with the expected succour; nor did he pull bit till his generous horse had carried him to the parte cochere of the British Ambassador's hotel. The secretary and friend of Lord Stair, for such he was, caused himself to be conducted to the presence of that nobleman, who, dressed in the splendid attire suitable to his station and the time, an era of velvet, lace, and jewels, was now enjoying, previously to the réunion of the evening, part of the first hour of solitude which had been allowed him during the day.

"Returned, and without the spoils of the chase!" exclaimed Lord Stair. "The fair Parisians are making you a milksop indeed, Villiers, if weather can turn so mighty a hunter from his sport."

"Your Excellency's remark would be just, if such were the case; though as regards the sop, I believe I am one indeed," returned the secretary; "but the stags of Rambouillet have been given up for other game that I am upon the scent of."

"Speak plainly," said the Earl, raising himself from the quiescent and musing posture in which he had hitherto indulged, in a fauteuil by the fire-side.

"To speak plainly, then, my dear lord, you, as well as myself, this morning saw the two young Spaniards who lately joined Cellamare,—Porto Carrero and Monteleone!"

" Proceed," said Lord Stair.

"And you perhaps imagine that they are now in Paris, sleeping off, probably, the effect of the strong wines and garlick that accompanied their somewhat peculiar supper?"

"I imagine no such thing," replied the Earl,

"for I saw their passports signed yesterday. Is
this all your wonder?"

The secretary looked disappointed, but quickly rallied.

"Nay," said he, "this is not all my wonder; they have had a break-down—"

The Earl laughed, though not discourteously.

"A French voiture breaking down! Why, my good Villiers," said he, "miracles seem not yet to have ceased with you; we shall soon have you visiting Rouge-Croix* for a piece of the philosopher's stone."

"The Spaniards have perhaps provided themselves with a small bit, which they prize at an hundred thousand pistoles, but which, I imagine, you may get much cheaper, my lord, if you will try," returned the secretary, somewhat ruffled.

" Explain," said Stair.

Mr. Villiers related the adventure of the valise, with the postillion's speculations as to what it might contain.

"A share in the mines of St. Barbe †!" said Lord Stair, with apparent indifference.

"Or, may it not be——?" The rest of his secretary's suggestion was made in so low a voice as scarcely to mount above a whisper; but it was delivered with such meaning, and in so confident a manner, that the Earl rose abruptly from his seat, and, setting aside his air of raillery, he

^{*} A charlatan who pretended to alchemy, and imposed upon numbers, asserting that his age was 100 years, although he looked not 50.

⁺ Mississippian bubble of the time.

placed a hand on Villiers's shoulder, while he bade him recount all that had occurred during his ride. As the secretary came to the conclusion, Lord Stair seemed suddenly to remember that an affair, with which this might have connexion, had been suffered to escape him. He took one or two turns across the apartment, and then, moving to an escrutoire, unlocked a drawer, from whence he took some papers which had that day been put into his hand.

"You are sure there was an Englishman amongst them?" he said at length.

"I could not be wrong in the staple English oath, as the light went out."

"No,—however, he might have been—but I have signed no passport for the Spanish frontier. Was it the voice of a gentleman?"

"I should say yes; but, at all events, it is unlikely they would have an English servant with them."

"How, unlikely? Are not these two Spaniards fresh from England? Has not Monteleone's father been some time there? He may have recommended one."

"Improbable, my lord. Besides, the Duque is now at the Hague."

"Where it is possible he may remain," said Stair, thoughtfully, but aside. "We think alike about this Englishman, I find," continued he aloud; "but I would give, now, the best grey in my stable for Porto Carrero's trunk."

"You shall have his valise," returned Villiers,
if you will lend me that same grey."

"It contains the Englishman's papers, eh?"
Villiers smiled, and nodded.

"And that Englishman is-?"

"The broken banker !"

"Here is the order for his apprehension, wherever he may be found, and which—stupid as I am—I had forgotten," said Stair, hurriedly; "and stay, here is another order that will help you to half a dozen mousquetaires. The grey is at your service; and take what money you like."

Villiers prepared to depart.

"I shall overtake them yet," said he, "before they reach Chartres. A most lucky break-down!"

"Thornhill is but a bad substitute for you," said Lord Stair, alluding to a military attaché; "and I am mistaken if he would not like to have your present expedition off your hands; but it is yours of right. Away with you, and bring the box here with all speed,"

" And the Englishman?"

"Hang him," said Stair: "but he is a necessary incumbrance,—yes, and the Englishman*."

When his most confidential secretary had departed, Lord Stair, attended by Captain Thornhill and a nobleman attached to the embassy, stepped into his coach, and was driven to the party for which Villiers had found him prepared. Little did the soldier enter into the intriguing

^{*} A bank in London, connected with many Spanish houses, about this time broke for an immense sum. One of the partners, an Englishman, escaped to Paris, but being followed by some of the sufferers, an order was obtained for his arrest. That there were other inducements for the step taken by Lord Stair in this business, the history of the period sufficiently attests.

spirit of the time; for, devoted to the service into which he had early entered, his disposition the least business-like, and his heart utterly disdaining the circuitous paths he saw each day pursued, to arrive at an end which he imagined might be so much sooner reached by straightforward policy, he but looked for a favourable opening, to thank his patron for all the kindness he had met with, and, bidding adieu to diplomacy, he intended once more to join the ranks he had left with the keenest regret.

A soldier of fortune, young Thornhill had, by an act of distinguished valour, attracted the notice of Lord Stair, at the bloody, but indecisive, battle of Malplaquet. Removed to his own regiment (the Greys), his patron still kept him under his protecting surveillance, and, seeing many good points of character in the blunt, yet honourable, young man, who seemed to possess no other friend of weight, the Earl selected him from amongst many others to join the embassy, when he found himself accredited at the Court of Versailles. The spirit of intrigue was energetic in the Earl's breast, if such a term may be applied to what requires the insidious windings of the deepest and most subtle policy. But Stair, with all his diplomatic art, was highly independent, and to the last degree honourable and gallant. Love of country, and a sense of duty to his Sovereign, rendered all that could be, by any possibility, undertaken to out-manœuvre a wily minister, in his eyes not only just but imperative. A clear head and unshrinking firmness of purpose brought to bear every scheme that he fostered; while a manner and address which bespoke the good offices of all whom he believed capable of serving him, joined to a kindness of heart, and an urbanity that made him beloved by his adherents, eminently fitted Lord Stair for the duties with which his Sovereign had intrusted him, at a time of infinite difficulty and uncertainty. And these qualities were enhanced by an intimate acquaintance with the manners of the people amidst whom he now found himself, a fascination

that attached to every thing he said or did, and a manly beauty, which, at the Regent's court, was by no means estimated as the least of his attractions. Nor was Stair slow to avail himself of the intelligence he from time to time had the talent to extract from the political intriguantes his attentions gained over to him *.

In his household, we are told that the greatest magnificence was ever displayed; his splendid table and an unbounded hospitality, distinguishing the British beyond other foreign ministers.

Being at a party a few years previously, Lord Stair engaged the Duchesse de Villars, then in the confidence of royalty, in a game at backgammon, at which he had the tact to lose, and draw from her the whole scheme of the Pretender's projected invasion. The next evening there was a large assemblage of the court circle at his hotel, when, privately receiving some intelligence, he left his guests in charge of a lady of high rank, and went in disguise to a café. Here he met with a Macdonald of Clanronald, passed with him for a Jacobin, and was let into many of the Pretender's secrets. He then went to a hotel, guided by what he heard, discovered the Chevalier by his description, and was some short time, even, in his company.

The Duchesse de Villars spoke in contemptuous terms of the Pretender, and doubted whether another plan of Louis XIV. would not prevent his giving the desired support namely, the intended restoration of the King of Sweden. The consummate beauty of his eight grey horses, which, upon state occasions, drew a quaintly-devised and richly-ornamented coach of cherry colour and pale yellow; his numerous attendants; his pages, and his outriders, in orange and silver liveries, gorgeously laced, attracted the wondering gaze of the Parisians, who saw the equipages of the most brilliant court in Europe eclipsed by those of the island Earl.

If money is universally accepted as being the chief sinew of war, woman, especially in France, may not unaptly be styled that of political intrigue. At the court of Versailles, during the last century, this was notoriously the case; nor, indeed, may the fair noblesse of any country, even at the present day, be exempted from the charge, or denied the credit, if this term please them better, of a continued desire to dive deep into the mysteries, or weave into a more complicated web, the difficulties and mazy meshes of some artfully-laid plot. At last, by a sudden and unlooked-for knot in the clue, the thread breaks

at a most unpropitious moment; and behold the various work all run out, while the author of such fragile texture stands exposed to the derision of a party, which has been, from the first, an undeemed spectator of the whole!

But not always may the fair intriguante be so luckless in her results; for, with skilful workmen to assist, and materials that can be relied on, she has been known so securely to establish the power thus strengthened, as to shake kingdoms to their foundation. Leaving, then, Lord Stair to profit by the good odour in which he found himself at the Regent's court, we will take the liberty of slightly touching upon the principal features that marked the policy of the time.

We have already ceded to the softer portion of the human race their due share of honour in the political drama; the attention must now be called to those splendid abilities, that widely-grasping ambition, which aimed at the moral subjugation of all civilized Europe;—for Russia had, a century ago, but half established her claim to be admitted of such. Nor, while we speculate upon the powerful state of Spain, and the position she was then enabled to assume amongst the nations, by the talent of that great statesman who stood at her helm, can we but admire at the abject condition into which she is now plunged.

Cardinal Alberoni, it is unnecessary to remind the historical reader, was the then minister of Philip V. The relations in which this monarch stood with the royal family of France had, in his own eyes, justified him in the desire of uniting the two kingdoms under one crown; nor was the spirit wanting in Alberoni to encourage and second, by all the means in his power, an enterprise that would so immensely aggrandize himself, and establish him as the virtual ruler of two great nations, which, by the influence Spain then possessed, must preponderate in every scheme of polity over the whole continent.

We are now speaking of the year 1718, at which time France was much shaken by party spirit, in particular throughout the province of Brittany, where the Regent Orleans was held in great disesteem, and the subversion of his government even compassed. The suspicion of poison which attached to the circumstances attending the deaths of the Dauphin and Dauphiness had, in the capital, long ceased to be entertained by even the staunchest opponents of Orleans; and the affability of his manner, and kindness of his disposition towards the people, had rendered him now as popular as he was formerly the reverse, or, indeed, as he was hated by many of the nobility. But the wildness of his youth and the debauchery of his maturer years, so eagerly seized on by his enemies as an excuse for reviling him, was greatly magnified in the provinces, and, being added to his known disinclination for business of state, which he left to the discretion of a profligate minister, it was adduced as another plea for totally overthrowing the regency.

Alberoni was not slow to avail himself of this state of things in France. Pressed by Orleans and George I. to complete the quadruple alliance

by the accession of Spain, he nevertheless threw every sort of obstacle and delay in its path. adroit Cardinal was, in fact, playing a deep and extensive game; for, while a negotiation, even with Turkey, was in progress, an army was sent to Sicily, and a large fleet, narrowly watched by the English, kept ready to sail from Cadiz, either to assist in establishing the Spanish power in the above-named island, or to second the views of the Pretender upon the throne of England. The Emperor of Germany also confessed the weight of Spanish influence; and while Europe was thus kept in daily apprehension of war, the Cardinal refused to afford a satisfactory reply upon the great question, and deceived the British Admiral with evasive answers till he should be able to bring all his schemes to bear at once.

While the Pretender was urged to make another attempt upon the English shores, the wily minister prepared to embarrass the Regent, and paralyse his power by exciting an insurrection in France, an enterprise in which there were but too

many ready to join him. Amongst his friends were the Cardinal de Polignac, the President Malezieu, the Duchesse du Maine, and many others. The husband of this lady had been degraded from the rank of prince by the Regent, and indecorously treated in other ways upon the death of Louis XIV., in order to crush his pretensions to the regency, which, from the ambiguous tenor of the King's will, he conceived himself, although illegitimate by birth, equally justified in asserting with Orleans. The Duke and Duchess of Maine deeply resented the insult, but especially the latter, who, with the blood of Condé in her veins, willingly lent herself to the Cardinal's plans.

A woman of her influence was looked upon as the most valuable of adherents; but the political power she possessed, as well as her talent for intrigue, were probably much over-rated by her party.

Well did Alberoni know that measures were taking to annihilate him; and sensibly alive was

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he also to the knowledge that Spain's mightiest efforts were insufficient to resist the three most powerful nations of Europe combined against her. He began, then, with Orleans, thinking that if he could remove him, the forces of France would be at his disposal, or at least they would not be employed against Spain; and George, deprived of so powerful an ally, would be obliged to moderate his zeal in the emperor's interests.

The plot was so well contrived that success seemed infallible. The malcontents of France had recourse to the Spanish court; and the Prince of Cellamare, the Spanish ambassador at Versailles, was ordered to treat with them. "Bishops, priests, monks, nobles, officers, and governors," says Tindall, "were ready for the undertaking, and numbered amongst the conspirators."

The project was to seize the Regent at some party of pleasure, which he frequently made about Paris with his mistresses. The young King's person, also, was to be secured, and proper orders issued for the assembly of parliaments for settling the government

Affairs were in this state, the mines ready to spring, and the train thus well and artfully laid, at the commencement of our history. The Cardinal hoped to see France the theatre of a vast and general conflagration; but the eye of a lynx was upon all his movements. The British minister, well served by his own adherents, and ably supported by the French government, received early information of every intrigue; and his peculiar talent for discovering plots and comparing circumstances led him to inquiries more minute, and decisions more prompt, than even the government of that country in which he was a stranger. The Regent had been early put on his guard through the means of Lord Stair; but such was his supineness, that on one particular occasion letters of the greatest importance, and which he knew contained the particulars of a conspiracy, are said to have remained unopened a whole night at the instance of some companion in excess, who feared that the enjoyment of the hour would be thereby lost. Idle as this tale might be, there was surely but too great reason to believe the Regent capable of such conduct; nor were there wanting those who, professing to be intimate with the manner of his private life, were alert to publish every transaction that occurred, with embellishments suited to give piquancy to the tale. allel and governor at binon want with he been

CHAPTER II.

3rd Outlaw. Stand, sir, and throw us what you have about

If not, we'll make you, sir, and rifle you.

Speed. Sir, we are undone; these are the villains that all travellers do fear so much.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE travellers who had excited the curiosity and suspicions of Villiers, and who were now the unconscious objects of his pursuit, had provided themselves with a less fragile voiture; and, urging the postillion to a quicker pace, speedily composed themselves into that contented slumber which the happy triumph over some great obstacle usually produces. The storm had passed off, and the sky wore a less gloomy appearance, while certain streaks of grey and crimson in the east bespoke the approach-

ing dawn, as the domestic who rode behind checked his horse, to listen to a sudden tramp of cavalry, which the sight of some dark objects in the rear assured him was not the creation of fancy.

Galloping forward, he bade the postillion, in the best French he was master of, to accelerate his speed, hoping to reach Chartres before they could be overtaken; for the heavy state of the roads had necessarily prevented them from getting even as far as that town, though its buildings now began to show their dim outlines about a mile in front. Uncertain of the nature of the strangers, their purpose, or honesty, the faithful servant truly acted with discretion in this advance; but as he cast frequent glances behind, the distance between the parties became fearfully less, and the forms of the horsemen more distinct; while the report of a pistol and the whistling of its ball, purposely fired over head, sounded awfully near the frightened postillion. At the same time was heard a shout of "Au nom

du Roi, arrêtez vous!" from the mouth of the Commissary of Police; and a dozen mousquetaires rode quickly up to the sides of the carriage. The horses' heads were seized, and a carabine presented at the driver. The sudden stop aroused the travellers from their sleep, and to the consciousness of their being, as they believed, surrounded by banditti. Nor, to men in their situation, was the shout repeated of "Au nom du Roi et du Regent!" very consolatory, since, innocent of a state crime, as each might be, he full well knew that a lodgment in La Force or the Bastile was the usual sequel to a government arrest.

Villiers pushed aside the mousquetaires, and bowing to the Spaniards, requested them to descend, in a tone that manifested no expectation of a refusal. They complied slowly and sullenly, bending stern looks upon the speaker, in which anxiety mingled with resentment.

"Señores Porto Carrero and Monteleone," said Villiers, affecting to read an official-looking document; "your papers of every sort are required."

They demurred, with various incoherent exclamations; and, folding their cloaks around them, retired a pace or two, with heads thrown back in all the offended pride of Spaniards.

"Au nom du Roi et du Regent!" cried the Commissary, not understanding a word that had been said; for Villiers had spoken in the Spanish language.

"Monsieur le Commissaire, let your men do their duty," said Villiers. "Arrest these gentlemen, but respect their persons. There should be another in the voiture, or I am mistaken—Sir Joseph Hodges," continued he, looking in, and seeing the immoveable form of the third traveller reposing, as it seemed, through all the din. "Sir Joseph Hodges, a subject of the King of England," cried Villiers again, though the form moved not, "you are my prisoner!"

"Who are you, and by what authority do you venture to arrest me on French ground?" de-

manded the gruff Englishman, but without moving.

" Au nom du Roi et du Regent!" once more exclaimed the Commissary.

"Monsieur le Commissaire, let your men do their duty: respect his person, but pull him out of the coach," said Villiers, coolly.

An arm and a leg were put in immediate possession of the requisite number of dismounted mousquetaires.

"Ma foi, comme cet Anglais est lourd!" exclaimed one, as he dropped his particular quarter of the struggling burden on the turf.

"Peste soit du gros bœuf!" said a second, releasing another member.

"Nous en voilà bien quittes?" grunted the remainder, as they threw him on the ground. But this forcible eduction was not to be achieved without some results, for, rising indignantly, the stout and burly young Englishman began to lay about him so vigorously, that two of his late

assistants were quickly sprawling on the earth; and before Villiers could interfere, the sabre of a third had disabled one of the arms, that were swinging like those of a windmill, to the detriment of the unscientific Frenchmen.

"I have to thank you for this," said the wounded man, looking furiously at Villiers, as he allowed himself to be secured.

"I am very sorry," returned he; "but it is your own fault, you must allow, Sir Joseph."

"Sir Joseph! I wish Sir Joseph had been at the devil, before I went on his fool's errand," exclaimed the other, bitterly.

"Then it is a mistake," said Villiers.

"Yes, a damnable mistake for me, with this cut in my right arm: I shall not be able to write for a month."

"Or longer, probably; but you confess you are working for Sir Joseph: and may I ask who you are?"

"Who?-why I am honest John Gibbons,

for want of a better name-attorney at lawand so forth."

"Not so honest, either," said Villiers; "since you are assisting a bankrupt to defraud his creditors. Gentlemen, look to his wound, and search the voiture."

The mousquetaires divided into three parties, ransacked the coach, and guarded their several prisoners.

"Señor Porto Carrero, I demand the valise you hold there, wrapped in your cloak;" said Villiers, having in vain searched for it in the carriage.

The cavalier made no reply.

" Your valise, or the Bastile!" said Villiers, firmly.

"My life before either!" exclaimed the fiery Spaniard, rolling his cloak round his left arm, and drawing a dagger as he leaped aside from the attendant mousquetaires.

"Monsieur le Commissaire, let your men do their duty, and secure the prisoners." Porto Carrero* was instantly seized and disarmed, while Villiers took possession of that which he sought. Monteleone also underwent a search. Papers of every sort strewed the ground, some of which the English secretary looked at with an air of importance, but retained none; and, commanding the mousquetaires to repack and restore the various articles of baggage to their former places, he released the Spaniards.

"Guard those gentlemen to their coach," said he, when all was ready. "Señores, I wish you a pleasant journey to the frontier. En avant, postillon! Mr. Gibbons, be good enough to mount."

"My baggage!" shouted the attorney at law, as the lumbering vehicle jolted on. "My baggage,—my wound,—my baggage!"

"You must do without it—mount, sir. Gentlemen, assist him."

"En avant, messieurs!" cried the Commissary;

^{*}This was the son of the celebrated Cardinal: his companion, son of the Duke of Montelcone, Spanish ambassador to the court of St. James's; but who, at this time, had gone over to the Hague,

and with the disabled Gibbons strapped behind a mousquetaire, and swearing strange oaths, all, save one, incomprehensible to the multitude, the party set off for Paris at a round trot.

The heart of Villiers has before been described as a hard one, and it may be imagined what degree of sympathy was excited in his bosom by the forlorn state of the wounded man. Far from relaxing his speed, he urged on the mousquetaires, after baiting an hour at the first auberge, and either turned a deaf ear to his complaints, or laughed at threats and revilings which he regarded as equally vain and contemptible. In due time they arrived at the Barrière de Passy; the officer of the guard bowed to the sign manual of the French minister, and the little troop entered Paris, where, giving particular directions for the accommodation and security of his prisoner, Mr. Villiers took with him a single file, to whose horse was attached the mysterious and jealously-watched valise, and struck off in another direction towards the hotel of the British Ambassador.

We have infused but little perspicuity into the style of our narrative, if it has not been made clear that the apprehension of an insolvent banker was, in the eyes of Lord Stair, a matter of secondary consideration when he despatched Mr. Villiers upon the errand just related.

"The object of my pursuit," said the latter, when he was closeted with his patron,—

"Has outwitted you!" interrupted Stair;
having remained in Paris while you was riding after him; but, never mind, you have, I see, got that which I am in pursuit of!"

"You have it, my lord," said Villiers, "in statu quo, at least, as far as regards me; and, if the Spaniard spoke truth, worth an hundred thousand pistoles."

"Send for Thornhill," said Stair, "we must have witnesses of what it contains: there shall be honesty in our dealings—all fair and above board.—Nay, what do you smile at? In the mean time, for this service I am your debtor, whatever may be the result." "Mention it not, my dear lord, the affair has been one of pleasure to me. I would, however, that it had passed off without bloodshed."

He then related the adventure with the false banker, at which Stair expressed much sorrow, and ordered every attention to be paid him till he could inquire in how far the Attorney had been culpable.

No banking documents filled the valise, well might Lord Stair divine,—no jewels, or other treasure; but letters of the greatest possible importance to the Regent and to the peace of the kingdom. The uppermost papers were of minor consequence; but as the curious hand of Villiers dived into the lower compartment, and brought out, one by one, scrolls and folded sheets, some duly sealed, others but tied with silken strings, the clearest marks of a deep-laid conspiracy became manifest. These were in the writing of Cellamare and his confidential adherents, and superscribed to the Cardinal Minister of Spain. As Lord Stair glanced quickly over, and placed

them on a table, the sacredness of which even his most favoured secretary never invaded, his countenance exhibited the marks of solid satisfaction, as that of one well pleased to arrive, beyond his utmost hopes, at the perfect elucidation of a highly interesting mystery.

Burning with curiosity, doomed, however, to be unsatisfied, Villiers saw the important objects of his late travel set aside from the profaneness of his touch, while Thornhill stood by, indifferent as to what might be their consequence, with the air of one who performed a necessary, but irksome, duty.

"These," said the Earl, as he put apart, after carefully examining four or five documents, "are for another eye than mine; the rest of this trash may be returned into the valise; and, Thornhill, do you put my private seal upon it."

The Captain obeyed.

"You will now betake yourself to the Palais-Royal," continued Stair, "and say that I demand an immediate audience of the Regent. You will yourself see the Chevalier de Sanictot, and impress upon him the necessity of my not being dallied with."

The Earl and his Secretary were again alone,

"Now, Villiers, how can I sufficiently acknowledge my obligation to you for acquitting yourself so well? You departed without taking cash for your expenses. This paper is nothing," continued Stair, as he put into his hand an order for two thousand crowns, which was paid out of the secret-service money, and lost at a salon à jeu in the course of a few hours,—"this goes for nothing. I hope to give you, one day, more solid proofs of my gratitude."

As Mr. Villiers was one of the last men to reject a present, coming in any shape that he believed it compatible with his honour to accept, he had, in the present instance, but few scruples to combat with. Never, indeed, did there exist a human being who, in common parlance, less understood the value of money; and as the want

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of this knowledge produced a constant vacuum in his purse, he was fain to fill it by whatever honourable means might present themselves to his view.

CHAPTER III.

He hath made a match with such a wrangler, That all the courts of France will be disturbed With chaces. We understand him well; And he comes o'er us with our wildest days, Not measuring what use we make of them.

SHARSPEARE.

To the Regent, Duke of Orleans, may hardly be applied so strong a term as that of inaptitude for state affairs: the particular failing that such an accusation might imply were rather a dislike, an abhorrence, of any occupation but that of pleasure,—of all, in fact, which should deprive him for an instant of the beloved society of his mistresses, or of his roues. We are told, indeed, that he had great credit with foreign ministers for the sagacity and address he displayed in politics, his exquisite discernment, his facility of

treating, turning, and disposing of an affair, his talent for business, his clearness of exposition, the acuteness of his questions, with the ease and shrewdness of his replies. Affable and complaisant, he listened with an air of benevolence which charmed even those he was obliged to refuse a boon; and when, at length, the tedium of prolixity could no longer be borne, his eye beamed with good humour, and its piercing glance, which said "enough," was softened by an expression that told the offender he was not irremissible. It may be imagined with what secret impatience he underwent such martyrdom.

The unhappiness which his system caused to France, his reluctance to look deeply into affairs, his visionary schemes, and the precarious situation in which he stood, with an unprincipled, selfish, and temporising man at his right hand*,

^{*} The Abbé, afterwards Cardinal, Dubois. It would appear that he was more a man of intrigue than business, nearly all the most important affairs of office having fallen into arrear during his administration. Foreign ministers complained that they could only seize an opportunity of speaking to him by

may be said to have mainly assisted to level that foundation to the revolution, commenced long before by those stubborn natures which the oppression of her princes and ministers, but particularly of Mazarin, had roused. The pen had been at work for half a century, or further back; and, though the hour was as yet unripe, the sword, at such a season a more contemptible weapon, had already leaped from its scabbard at the call of sedition. Paris had been more than once the scene of bloodshed; but the strong arm and warlike character of the fourteenth Louis succeeded in turning the tide of fire and devastation into a more distant channel. It was destined, nevertheless, to flow again into the heart of France. The infant flame was but stifled for a time; it still smouldered in secret. ready to burst forth anew, and waited but the

stealth. Overwhelmed with correspondence, he once threw into the fire a considerable quantity of letters and despatches, the seals of which had never been broken, joyfully exclaiming, "Me voils au courant?"

forming of such master-spirits as Voltaire and Rousseau to light an enfeebled monarchy to its

The popularity of Orleans balanced his misgovernment, and prevented any outburst of a republican nature. Many of his measures, well planned and beneficently intended, might with safety have been applied to almost any other country than the one he ruled; but his projects were too sweeping, and there was a morbid excitement or predisposition to disease in the popular body of France, that rendered any liberal measure dangerous in the extreme, and to be undertaken but with the greatest caution.

With this prince it was not possible that such a nobleman as Stair should be other than a favourite. The easy wit and graceful pleasantry of the Earl, the insinuating address of his manner, and the facility of a disposition that could, without compromising a tittle of dignity, bend itself to the foibles of the Regent, enabled him to walk straight to the fountain-head of court favour, rather than wind by tortuous paths to

Languid and nerveless, with a brain still wrung by the last night's excess, and a countenance the true index of his wild and dissolute life, Orleans, attended by a numerous suite, was going through the form of listening to various uninteresting details and requests, when the British Ambassador arrived at the Palais Royal. It was late, and several importunates had been already dismissed unsatisfied, yet, strange anomaly, not displeased. A set of gentlemen attached to the young King's establishment had patiently awaited their turn, and were now by their leader or deputy urging some proposition which Orleans avoided. Annoyed at the perseverance with which the deputy insisted on the King's right to certain privileges that were not accorded, the Regent turned delightedly away as the Duc de Saint Simon led up Lord Stair. Glad of so agreeable an interruption, he received the Earl with joy; and, speaking to the Gouverneur du Roi, who being an adherent of the Regent's, had however taken no part in the previous disquisition, said aloud—

"Monsieur de Villeroi, dismiss your friends; Milord Stair has need of a private audience, and I can indulge them no farther."

The Marechal smiled and obeyed.

"If his royal highness will permit me to speak one word,——" said the deputy, moving towards Orleans.

" Not one, Monsieur," interrupted the Regent, impatiently.

"Then I must go to the King," observed the other.

"Monsieur, you may go to the devil," was the reply.

"Does your royal highness wish this answer to be recorded?" asked the undaunted deputy*,

* The Regent is said to have made such a rejoinder on a similar occasion. The authorities of Paris, when waiting officially upon him at the Palais Royal, were often shocked at the language he addressed towards them, and the more devout Christians scandalized at the light and insulting manner in

an indirect remonstrance, at which Orleans could not do other than laugh, and, patting the head of the colloquist, he turned easily on his heel, threw an arm over the Earl's shoulder, and left the audience chamber.

It was some short time after they were closeted that Stair succeeded in fixing the attention of the Regent to the serious affair he was about to develop.

"And now let us to business," exclaimed the latter, having joyfully achieved the demolition of a well-built reputation; and, by comparing notes with Stair, made it certain that the young and lovely Marquise de C—— had too long enjoyed the character of a saint. What views himself might have encouraged he did not venture on this occasion to disclose; nor, indeed, would he have gone further, even had the Earl's

which he treated their religiou and its ministers—his own is supposed to have troubled him but little. One day, after making a number of bishops, he laughingly said before the whole court—" Les Jansenistes ne se plaindront pas, car je viens de donner tout à la grace, et rien au merite."

patience not been already tried to the uttermost.

"And now let us to business. Dubois has the nose of a bloodhound; but, you, milord, have the eye of a hawk. Nay, I do not mean to compare you—he stoops and grovels: you soar till it is time to strike."

Stair bowed, and looked surprised.

"There is a plot," continued the Regent; "I know it; and by your air, you have hit upon the means to unravel it, or extricate me:—there, am I not right? Dubois has been all the morning trying to pump out of a miserable Abbé.—Chatillon!" cried the Duke, in a loud voice. "I keep that fellow about me, because he is such a booby that he will not betray my secrets.—What is that Abbé's name whom they took this morning?" continued he, as M. de Chatillon entered. The stolid being endeavoured to recal it; but for some time stood silent, with the door in his hand. "Brigaut, I have it:—Away, thou sleepy mortal! Begone, and brighten up at night.

Send Monsieur Dubois here. Oh, milord, I am killed daily by these plots that end in nothing. Well, Monsieur l'Abbé, what news from your brother in iniquity?"

The obsequious Cardinal in perspective fawned upon his former pupil, his patron, and the tool of his petty yet unprincipled schemes of ambition, as he told the result of an examination, which, as the Regent surmised, ended in nothing.

"It is certain," said Dubois, "that he knows much, and is a traitor; but he will confess"—

"To nothing!—I said so," exclaimed the Duke." Let him be brought hither; I will examine him myself."

"As it pleases your royal highness," said the Abbé; but I have failed."

"Nay, then the devil would get nothing out of him," replied the Regent. "I believe you may let him go."

"To the Bastile?" asked Dubois, with a twinkling eye, that boded no good.

"Ha, ha!—why, my Abbé, I did not mean that; but the King's subjects should lodge in safety: even let it be so."

"He speaks of a Chevalier de Mesnil," observed the Abbé.

" An honest fellow—that same !"

"Scarcely, my prince. He had charge of Brigaut's papers."

Aye? They will open our eyes."

"Had he not burned them all, they might."

"A very traitor!" exclaimed the Regent, lightly.

"To the Bastile with them both. I know the pleasures of society too well to separate such friends."

"They will not see a great deal of each other," said the Abbé, with a sneer; "but they are already in comparative durance. De Mesnil avers that the papers were confided to his charge merely as family documents; and that hearing of the Abbé's arrest, he committed the whole to the flames, in case of the worst. They

were but fellow lodgers, and by no means friends,"

"An honest fellow! Did I not say so?" cried the Regent.

"But listen, my prince," continued the Abbé," the Marquis de Mesnil, having heard of his arrest, has just been here to assure me that the Chevalier is no relation of his."

"So much the worse for him," said the Regent. "The Chevalier is a very gallant fellow. But leave us, Monsieur l'Abbé; Milord Stair wishes to be gone, I see."

"Not so," said the Earl, who had neverthetheless beheld with some scorn the trifling of the Regent, and heard with much impatience the babble of Dubois. "Not so; but your royal highness will be pleased to give me your whole attention, and, for a few minutes, at least, guarantee our privacy."

The Regent yawned suppressedly, as Stair, the Abbé having withdrawn, took from his small portfolio a packet of letters. "In what manner I have secured these," said he, "your royal highness shall presently know. In the mean time let me explain, that they are all Cellamare's fabrication. Three of them intended to be addressed by the King of Spain;" the first to his cousin of France.

"The second?" said Orleans, opening his eyes as another yawn died at the intelligence.

"The second," said Stair, "is to the parliament of this kingdom."

" The third?"

"To the States-General, when they shall be assembled; and a fourth, ready manufactured, for these same States to send forthwith to his Catholic Majesty, praying him to come and take possession of the regency, in the room of his royal highness, Philip, Duke of Orleans."

"Extremely obliging," said the person most interested in this arrangement, yet but little disconcerted: "and the manner in which his royal highness is to be disposed of is not thought of sufficient consequence to mention."

"That, I imagine, to be beyond a doubt," said Stair.

"How!--think you they intend the Bastile for my accommodation?"

"Such were too degrading for a prince of the blood," replied the Earl; "I fancy you would scarcely go so far."

"I understand you," said Philip, rather seriously, and taking from Lord Stair a list of about sixty names, amongst which were several of the highest in the kingdom. "I understand you; and I have yet to thank these gentlemen—aye, and ladies also, I perceive, who are so particularly anxious for my welfare. Now, milord, by what means, may I ask, did you obtain this interesting correspondence of my friend Cellamare?"

Stair briefly related the circumstances that led to its interception, dwelling somewhat longer than we may think necessary on the arrest of the banker, which had in fact taken place in Paris, while Mr. Villiers rode after his shadow; the Earl being fully aware, when he despatched him, that his Secretary had not the least chance of a rencontre with the real man.

"This shall be looked to," said Philip; and, ringing a bell, the Abbé again appeared.

"You have more of those—a portmanteau full, milord?—Dubois, hearest thou that? A trunk full of treason. Milord Stair will send it; and you and Le Blanc may feast your eyes with its contents: only spare me any more plots to-night;—and there—and there—and there!" concluded he, throwing the several letters to the gloating Abbé. "This list is for no other eyes than my own—as yet, at least. We will give them a little grace—eh, milord? They may repent, and become good men and true."

"And the women?" said Stair, archly.

"Oh, they will doubtless follow the example of their lords," returned the Regent, with a sneer.

The conversation again became light, and Philip, one of the most accomplished gentlemen of the day, detained Lord Stair another half hour, fascinated even at such a moment with the charms of a far more sterling wit than the common trifling of that which, passing current for such, at every turn met his ear during the day.

He departed, and the Regent, carelessly depositing in his pocket the list of traitors, rejoined
Saint Simon and Villeroy. Dubois was contented to rest for some hours ignorant of the
high names the guarded catalogue contained,
consoling himself with the anticipation of Porto
Carrero's valise, which would afford sufficient
employ in the scrutiny till he should worm out
of the Duchesse de Valori the secrets he full
well knew would be confided to her by the
Regent.

Reckless as Orleans affected to be, the intelligence he had heard was of too vast an importance to be unprofited by. Dubois had long been suspicious of an insurrectionary movement, and had that very day caused the unfortunate Brigaut to be arrested, from whom, although nothing at the time could be elicited, the ministerial Abbé hoped to draw, in the course of time, a full discovery of the plot. He was, however, as we have seen, forestalled by the activity of the British Ambassador. The arrest of Mesnil, and an immediate order for that of the Spanish travellers, which we may in this place observe, was effected near Poictiers, comprised the whole extent of Dubois' present ability to act; for the Regent, accustomed to make his own decisions, and these somewhat of the most absolute at times, chose rather to revolve all the circumstances in his own mind till the next day should determine his conduct, than expose himself to the chance of hearing advice which there was little doubt he would reject. He possessed, besides, a generosity inconsistent, indeed, with the tenor of great part of his conduct, but which, in this instance, urged him to consign to oblivion the names of most who were implicated in the plot, reserving for punishment those, merely, whose illustrious and high rank could not with safety to himself or the kingdom be passed over.

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CHAPTER IV.

Look ye how they change!
Their cheeks are paper.—Why, what read you there,
That hath so cowarded and chaced your blood
Out of appearance?

SHAKSPEARE.

It was long ere the Earl had perused the contents of the "trunk of treason," so styled by Orleans, and despatched it under the care of Thornhill to the bureau of Monsieur le Blanc, joint minister with Dubois for foreign affairs. Dinner, late indeed for that period, had not yet been discussed, and numerous were the surmises to which a delay so unusual had given rise. This, at length, was gone through, and Stair, as agreeable and undistracted from the present occupation as if nothing uncommon had but the moment before

held possession of his mind, entertained his household guests to such purpose, that when they rose from table all speculations upon the undiscovered mystery had flown from their minds, and nothing remained but a sense of their host's agreeable qualities, his convivial disposition at the board, and the wit and sparkle of his conversation.

The repast was short, and again Stair and Thornhill were together in the library. It is not, however, to be supposed that the British Ambassador trusted for the execution of all his confidential business to the Captain of Horse, who wished, indeed, to be anything but a diplomatist, whose chief desire and aim were the "setting of a squadron in the field," and whose heart was eternally in the stable or the barrack-yard, or at the jovial mess-table of his corps. Fully as his patron estimated the worth of that heart, and the integrity of Thornhill's mind, he looked for something more than an infallible knowledge of a horse's points in one who was to be constantly at

his right hand. Nor may we imagine that a wild and gambling Secretary, well born and bred, zealous, talented, and indefatigable though he might be, held the only other post of confidence about the Earl. There were others of higher rank, and it may be of more ingenious diplomatic ability, than even Villiers around Lord Stair; but his partiality for the soldier, and knowledge of Villiers' unswerving zeal in the execution of any duty, however arduous, that might be entrusted to him, induced their patron to extend his friendship to these two in so great a proportion, that there was not wanting a jealousy amongst other members of the suite which could not fail to have an unpleasant effect. So keen a perception as Stair's we may think was quick to observe this, and Thornhill was presented with a commission as Exempt and Captain in the first troop of Horse Guards; more, as it appeared, however, from his own desire of active employment, if moving from London to Windsor and from Windsor to London may be called such, than any fear of an unpleasant collision between the hot dragoon and the rest of the corps diplomatique. Villiers, with all his faults, he was determined to retain.

The Secretary made not his appearance at dinner, and Lord Stair inquired for him, when the delight of Thornhill at his new appointment had in some measure subsided. He had not been seen; the grey was all that could be answered for, and he was lame. Stair replied that the horse no longer appertained to him, and that the misfortune was the Secretary's; they had, however, done good service—man and beast: and the former was, the Earl supposed, now taking his rest after so fatiguing a journey. Thornhill shook his head.

"I understand you," said Stair; "but I hear his step; leave us together."

"Villiers," continued he, rather seriously, when they were alone, "I had hoped that you were refreshing yourself after your ride with sleep and food, or at least with rest, to enable you to assist in despatching any business that your late good service may have entailed upon me; but I see, by your dress and exhausted appearance, that you have known neither the one nor the other since your return."

The haggard and wild-looking Secretary attempted some excuse, but his patron was not to be deceived.

"You have been playing," said Stair, as he regarded him with a steady and scrutinizing glance.

"I acknowledge it, my dear lord," replied Villiers; "and," continued he, as if resolved to get rid at once of what weighed heavily upon his mind, "I have lost a large sum, and I have borrowed from one whom I wish not to be beholden to, and yet whom I regret to say I have no means of paying."

Lord Stair gazed on him with a stern look.

"How often have you promised that similar losses should be your last?" said he.

"I now, indeed, make that promise for the

last time," replied Villiers; "and, little as you may believe me, am ready to bind myself by the most solemn vow, that nothing henceforward shall induce me—"

The Earl held up his hand.

"I do not believe you, Villiers,—forgive me; I could not credit you if you swore upon your knees that such should be your future line of conduct. I know it is impossible; and I grieve for you with all my soul."

Stair paced up and down the apartment in some agitation, while Villiers stood with his arms folded, not deigning to reply.

"Let me entreat you, however,—let me urge and implore you," continued the Earl, "to consider, that not yourself only is a sufferer by an indulgence of this baleful vice; and let me further pray you to exert the great strength of mind and of purpose I know you to possess, to steel yourself against temptation. What is your debt, and to whom?"

Villiers named both.

"De Chaulnes!" exclaimed Stair: "I will then, have it sent to him in your name."

"Nay, my lord, I must meet him with or without the money at St. Gaudin's."

"Then you are lost!" said the Earl, emphatically.

"I shall be safe at least from play," returned Villiers, with a ghastly smile; "for when he is paid there will remain little for me to stake!"

"I lend you this," said Lord Stair, giving him an order for the sum: "you will return it to me at your convenience: I do not ask it sooner. I had wished you to have accompanied me to the Duchess de Villars; but this unfortunate propensity, which has been your own bane through life, now visits me also, and perhaps with justice, as having in some sort been the means of your imprudence. I am taking the liberty of a friend, and as a friend I trust you will receive this, Villiers," continued the Earl, holding out his hand, "bitter as the pill is to swallow."

"Bitter, indeed!" said the Secretary, at one

time the equal in society, and still the companion of Lord Stair. "Bitter, indeed; but it has been of my own seeking."

He resigned his passive hand to the clasp of Stair, but returned not the pressure. In silence and in grief he left the apartment, and, without changing his dress, repaired to the appointed place of meeting with De Chaulnes, one of the most dissipated and most ruthless gamesters in Paris.

Dressed in the sumptuous style of the period, yet marked for a taste in his apparel, and a correctness of choice that shewed through the glitter of lace and jewels which fashion would not allow him to dispense with, the British Ambassador entered the saloon of the Maréchale, where all of brilliant and beautiful, all of lovely and modish, had met together, in an atmosphere of courtly breeding, wit, epigram, scandal, and intrigue.

The petits soupers of the Regent at Paris were as much too licentious for those to assist at who had still any reputation likely to sufferand here we must defend Lord Stair from the imputation of attending-as were his soirées at Versailles too insupportably dull and ennuyantes for any to present themselves at who could frame an excuse for absence. At the one, licence reigned supreme; at the other, some deference to the world's report urged him to force a demeanour of propriety which, though irksome, he still thought it the duty of his high station to put on; but this solemn farce enacted, the staid habit of an hour was thrown off, and Philip of Orleans became again himself,-the accomplished roué-the wild, wilful, and reckless debauchee, -a demoralizing example to the noble youth of France, which their predisposition but too much incited them to follow.

All the élite of the court then, on this evening, were to be found at the Maréchale de Villars, and even many of the intimate associates of Orleans; for he had called only the gayest of the dissolute, the wittiest of the abandoned—some

half-dozen of the laughter-loving clique, who formed its very soul and nucleus. There was a plot, and he loved not to dwell upon the thoughts thereof: it was discovered, and the morrow would publish all; meantime, pleasure should lend her aid to distract the mind from such unpalatable food.

At the Duchesse de Villars' were assembled people of all parties. No political distinction was here known, or at least evinced; and it was the policy of Lord Stair to keep on apparent terms of friendship with all. At one time he might be seen talking to the Princesse de Conti, at another to the young and lovely, but profligate Duchesse de Berri*: he was alternately spark-

*She died at the age of twenty-four. Having been warned two years previously that her dissipated life would hurry her to an early grave, she replied "Eh bien! Courte vie et joyeuse!" and continued the same course. Such was the licence of her conduct, that even so liberal a court as that of France, at this period, affected to be scandalized thereby. The Princesse de Clermont gave great offence by too openly canvassing her way of life—a circumstance not forgiven by the Duchesse, who found friends ready to carry the tale, with all its embellishments, to her ear. On her death-bed, which is described as a very awful one, she

ling with the Duc de Saint Simon, or deep in conversation with the Cardinal de Polignac; for cardinals were not here out of place. Now he might be enduring the platitudes of the Comte de Chatillon; and again amused by the systematic trifling of the Abbé de Vaubrun, an extraordinary little personage, who was every where and in every thing, a man so little wanting when his friends had need of him, that he would administer ghostly consolation at their deaths with the same pleasure that he had officiated at their nuptials; whom, in a word, Madame du Maine quaintly enough defined as the sublime de frivole.

"Why does our amiable Duchesse de Choiseul deny her friends the pleasure of one little glimpse in public?" said Stair to Madame du D——.

"Is she melancholy and love-sick for her absent

made confessions to the Regent, her father, which shocked even him. Her speech had, for a quarter of an hour, become quite inaudible; but, by the movement of her lips, and the dread anxiety she displayed to make herself comprehended, some terrible weight still lay upon her mind when death parted soul and body. lord? She yesterday appeared for a moment at the window, like a turtle-dove upon a branch; but descend she would not."

"She consoles herself," replied the lady, "and melancholy she cannot be."

"You surprise me! Already is the Duke replaced?"

"Wicked Lord Stair! His office is supplied by a young girl of fifteen, who entertains her in his absence. Nay, she is not handsome; but, as chère grand'-maman describes her, fraiche comme une pêche, folle comme un jeune chien, qui rit, qui chante, qui joue du clavecin, qui danse, qui saute au lieu de marcher, qui ne sait ce qu'elle fait et fait tout avec grace, qui ne sait ce qu'elle dit et dit tout avec esprit—voila comme elle se console avec sa petite laide!"

"A very delightful companion, doubtless," said the Earl, "and one who, plain as she may be, will make us jealous if she keeps the Duchess longer from our society. But see, who enters with such a flourish and glitter of diamonds?" "Madame de Clermont! And now, if I am not mistaken, we shall behold a scene."

The fair speaker was right, for, as the Princess made her appearance, Madame de Berri half rose from the fauteuil in which she had been reclining, and sent a female aide-de-camp to order her out of the room.

"Tell her," said the Duchess in an authoritative tone, " never to presume to come into my presence."

The Princess received the uncivil message with infinite disdain; but she was obliged to obey, and, turning her back upon royalty, left the room, having planted an additional degree of hatred in the breast of Madame de Berri.

Lord Stair was now drawn away by Madame de Villars, who, overwhelmed with confusion at the awkwardness of the late contre-temps, which it was hers to have prevented the possibility of occurring, sought relief in talking fast and nervously upon every subject rather than that which her mind most dwelt on. Whether her discourse was less comprehensible than usual, or from whatever cause, she thought at the moment the agreeable Stair strangely dull and distrait. But by degrees her attention, as well as that of the British Ambassador, became rivetted on the changing countenance of the Duchesse du Maine, who played at Biribi with others, at a table where De Chatillon now held the bank.

This was a man who never, except upon the most extraordinary occasions, trusted himself with the sound of his own voice. His face bespoke not seriousness, but doltish stolidity; he was, in fact, a very antidote to mirth, yet, for some unaccountable reason, we have seen that he wrote himself adherent to the gay Philip of Orleans. On the present occasion, nevertheless, some mighty power seemed to have set the ponderous engine at work, perhaps the all-confessed force of gold; for, as he raked the louis d'ors towards him, Stair heard the name of Cellamare issue from his sepulchral throat.

"It is no longer, then, a secret," thought the Earl.

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"Yes," said De Chatillon, in continuation:

"Porto Carrero immediately despatched a courier, and he is gone to Le Blanc, to get back the papers. But he and Dubois have laid their heads together, and—"

"And what?" eagerly demanded two or three voices, as Chatillon made a full stop.

"I know nothing further of that," said he:
"but the most amusing thing is, that they have arrested and sent to the Bastile an Abbé Bri—Bri—." He could not recollect the name, and those who knew it had no great desire to assist. At length it struck him. "Brigaut—Brigaut! And the drollest thing is, madame," addressing himself to the Duchesse du Maine, "the drollest thing is, that he has confessed all,—every thing, and thrown half Paris into a consternation!"

Here he broke into the first fit of laughter he had ever indulged in.

" Is it not very droll, madame?"

"Oh, strangely amusing," said the Duchess, who felt not the least inclination to join in his

mirth; but she was obliged to disguise her feelings, which we may believe to have been none of the most agreeable. "It is strangely amusing!" she repeated, in a tremulous voice.

"Oh!" cried De Chatillon, "it is enough to make one die with laughter! Figurez-vous, madame—only just fancy these unfortunate people, who believed their secret perfectly safe; only imagine—ha, ha, ha!—and here is a fellow who tells all that is asked him, and names every individual in the plot!"

This last was a terrible shock for the Princess; but exerting all her fortitude, she endured the painful conversation of M. de Chatillon to the end without any further signs of agitation. As this finished she retired from the table, and returned home, to throw herself, almost fainting, into the arms of Mademoiselle de Launay*, one of her maids of honour.

The Duchesse de Berri soon afterwards drove

Afterwards Madame de Staël, grandmother to the husband of Neckar's daughter.

off to La Muette, and the réunion dissolved immediately; for, in addition to the above little subjects for uneasiness, a report was brought in at the moment that the Petit Pont was burnt; that the fire threatened to consume all that quarter of Paris; and that the mob had commenced a scene of riot and pillage, which would not be stayed without bloodshed. The archers and mousquetaires on duty were assisted by a regiment of mounted chasseurs, whose colonel, M. de Chaulnes, was the subject of general encomium, for the activity and zeal he displayed in quelling the disturbance.

For the sake of Villiers, Lord Stair was rejoiced to hear the name of this officer so exalted; as it was evident that his other talents could not be employed upon the unhappy Secretary. Such was in fact the case; but we must reserve any farther account of the latter's proceedings for another chapter.

In the meantime it may not be out of place to mention, that Cellamare had received the startling intelligence of the seizure of all his despatches; that he had repaired immediately to M. le Blanc to complain of this injury; that he had been told of his papers being safely lodged in a place from which there was no chance of their being speedily released; and, moreover, that such evident marks of treason were discovered on their perusal, that he, Le Blanc, had the Regent's commands to seal up all his Excellency's other documents of every kind; and besides placing a guard over his hotel, reconduct him thither immediately under an escort of mousquetaires, whose custody he would probably remain in till he crossed the Spanish frontier, on his way to Madrid.

As this discovery was the prelude to a declaration of war between Spain and England combined with France, on the part of the two latter—as it was the probable means of preserving the balance of power in Europe, preventing as it did, by the overthrow of Alberoni's projects.

Pollgrass was dismissed to his ablay in Plan-

chance of Philip V.'s accession to the French throne—as the life of the Regent, a thing indeed of no great consequence to any but himself, was in all probability saved, as well as those of numerous other individuals, which the well-planned insurrection, thus frustrated, would have jeopardized in its commencement—we must here do justice to the foresight and intelligence of the British Ambassador, and the zealous activity of his assistants; nor amongst these will it be denied that Mr. Villiers is entitled to the very first place.

The Duke and Duchess of Maine were on the following day arrested, and placed in confinement at separate chateaux; the Cardinal de Polignac was dismissed to his abbey in Flanders; the Prince de Dombes, the Comte d'Eu, Monsieur de Pompadour, and several others of minor note were sent to prison—some to the Bastile, others to distant fortresses, and a few gentlemen of Brittany were beheaded: but further than this it does not appear that the con-

spirators were treated with as much severity as might have been expected from one so absolute as Orleans.

Cellamare being, upon the most incontestible proofs, convicted of traitorous correspondence and designs, was detained for a short time at Blois; but after the examination of Porto Carrero and Monteleone, who had once more been stopped near Poictiers, and brought back to the capital, the Ambassador was re-conducted to the Spanish frontier under a guard, and dismissed; while Monsieur de St. Aignan, who filled the same office at Madrid on the part of France, was as unceremoniously congedié by the King of Spain.

CHAPTER V.

There is some soul of goodness in things evil,

Would men observingly distil it out:—

They are our outward consciences,

Admonishing that we should dress us fairly for our end.

Thus may we gather honey from the weed,

And make a moral of the devil himself.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE close of the last chapter has a little anticipated the course of our tale: we will now return to Mr. Villiers, for whom somewhat anxious were the inquiries of Lord Stair, on returning from the Maréchale's party. He had not, however, been seen or heard of since the earlier part of the evening, when he left the hotel previously to the Earl; and we may therefore go back to that period, in order to accompany him forth or his adventures.

Rightly had his patron surmised that the

sudden and imperative call upon the services of M. de Chaulnes must save Villiers from the temptation to which his society would not fail to expose him. His alleged want of money to stake against his late adversary did not, Stair believed, render it absolutely impossible for him to play, since it were easy of De Chaulnes once more to make Villiers his debtor in a smaller sum, and playing for this, again leave off with the amount trebled by successive losses and trusts. The probability of Villiers waiting till morning at the appointed place of meeting, or of his meanwhile engaging in play with some adventitious stranger, was not calculated upon.

The house to which he had resorted was one of especial celebrity in Paris, possessing its gold table and its silver, its suppers, its wines, and, in short, every incentive to gaming that can be imagined. Here met, even in so aristocratical a period for France, the noble and the ruffler of less high degree,—the gamester of every shade of soi-disant consideration; and, till a

later hour of night had rendered each man careless of his conduct through desperation or enthusiasm, the utmost decorum prevailed, even to
a far too-finely weaved web of punctilio, which
the slightest unintentional offence broke through;
and he who found himself drawn within the edge
merely of its woof knew that retreat was impossible, save at the expense of honour—swords
must be crossed; for in such a place, where the
very air he breathed was redolent of danger as
it was intoxicating with temptation, an apology
would have branded one who wore a weapon
with the name of poltroon for life.

Villiers looked anxiously round the assemblage of gamesters, as fearing almost that his eye should light on him whom he sought; and can we say it was unnatural that he should have felt a temporary weight off his breast, and inhaled the close atmosphere more freely, when he failed to discover Monsieur de Chaulnes? As one who finds torture deferred—the evil hour put off—it was new life to him! He still

possessed the gold; there was none present to claim it. What if he could, by a bold and lucky venture, double the sum he held, and make himself once more independent in the world? With a mighty effort he thrust, as it were, the tempting spirit from him, and passed his hand across his eyes, to shut out such vision from the brain.

He succeeded, and, emboldened by the victory over himself, approached nearer to the scene of play; but the glittering heaps of gold, the neatly packed rouleaux, which passed from one hand to another, ruin to that and temporary bliss to his spoiler, raised once more the devil in his mind. He turned to fly the place, when the sight of a familiar countenance arrested his attention. It was that of the liberated Gibbons, who, with his arm in a sling, stood peering over the shoulders of the players, and elbowing in nearer to the table, unconscious of the black and foreboding looks of those he so unceremoniously obtruded upon.

"The burly knave!" thought Villiers. "At least I will make him some return for the wounded limb, by saving his life, which I see in jeopardy."

Walking round to the spot where he stood, he gently insinuated himself into the choleric and punctilious crowd; and, touching the sane elbow of the Englishman, begged the favour of a word.

"What's your will with me, sir?" demanded Gibbons, somewhat gruffly, as soon as they were clear of the group. "I think you should be satisfied with what you have already done."

"It is to make amends for that, that I wish to speak to you," replied Villiers.

"How, sir? I don't see what amends you have in your power."

" Simply, advice," said Villiers.

" Nothing easier to give, but damned seldom taken."

"Hush!-no one swears so early in the evening. Wait an hour or two, and you will hear plenty of it, however. But I can tell you, that, new as I see you are in Paris, it will not do to thrust people out of your way as if you were at a cock-fight in our own country. Another minute, and that little yellow man, just thumbing his miserable two louis, would have walked you out of the room."

"He walk me out of the room!—Well, and if he had?"

"Why, there is no saying when you might come in again."

" Pooh !- I could buy him as he stands."

"A very sensible replication! And a good bargain you would have, if there was a quarrel on your hands; but a deuced bad one if he was your antagonist, for he is an excellent swordsman."

"Perhaps a friend of yours?"

"On the contrary; his point has been at my breast before now."

"Well, I desire to have nothing to say to either of you-just now, at least; for I have not

forgotten this—don't you think it," pointing to his arm. "No, no, John Gibbons neither forgets nor forgives so easily. Satisfaction shall yet be mine."

"I laugh at your threats," said Villiers; "but if you are in want of money, I can lend—that is, I will get it for you."

"Money!" said Gibbons, disdainfully; and taking out a heavy purse, he held it before the eyes, and almost thrust it into the face, of Villiers:—"Money! and from such as you!"

"Well, well, don't insult me," said he, stepping back.

"Get it—yes; I'll answer for it you could:—some of the Spaniard's cash out of the valise you stole."

"Poor man!" said Villiers, endeavouring, under a shew of contempt, to conceal the rising passion.

" Poor!—I believe I could buy and sell you, with all your roguery."

"Enough, towards me, if you wish to leave

this house as you entered it, with a whole skin:—
and hark in your ear—the less you say about
that affair the better; nay, you may yet be
laid by the heels, if you are another day in
Paris. As to buying and selling, I believe at
present I am as rich a man as yourself."

"It is easy for you — but shew out: I'll bet a dozen of champagne of that, even."

"Done!" said Villiers, eagerly; unable to resist the temptation of a bet.

"Done!" cried the other, so loud as to draw the momentary attention of several people in the room; and banging his purse down on a table, he began to undo the strings.

"Not here, not here!" said Villiers, putting his hand on that of Gibbons. "We can get a private room, and there I do not mind if I drink the first bottle with you; for I am something tired with my day's work."

Gibbons looked suspiciously at him for a minute, and then, pocketing his money, followed into another apartment. "We'll have an umpire," said he.

"No, no!" said Villiers: "Honour between Englishmen. It is a bad place to look for an honest witness. Garçon—du vin de champagne! Now we are alone, down with your dust."

"Out with yours," cried the other, keeping his hand doggedly in the pocket where his money was bestowed.

"There, then, suspicious as you are!—nay, stand back awhile," said Villiers, taking out the order signed by Lord Stair, and sticking it on the point of his sword, which he held towards Gibbons: "read that at a respectful distance; if you mistrust me, it is but fair I should do the same by you."

"I have lost," said the other, gruffly. There is no mistaking that name."

The cork of a champagne bottle flew, and the sparkling liquor was poured out, before either had replaced entirely the subjects of their bet.

" Quatre livres, monsieur; et on paie sur le champ ici," said the garçon, seeing Gibbons button up the pocket where his purse was deposited, as Villiers pointed to him.

"Every scoundrel thinks one wants to cheat him," said the Attorney, just comprehending that he demanded money.

"They are shrewd physiognomists in France," observed Villiers, coolly. "But we must have more."

"True! Bring more a dozen d'ye hear, sirrah?"

"Ma foi, une douzaine!—Mais—oui, mon-

"Stop!" cried Villiers, as the agile waiter skipped off; "stop, we will drink this out first; and then, Mr. Gibson, or whatever your name may be, one bottle more, and I excuse you the rest of the bet."

"Oh, with all my heart!" said he, giving the necessary orders, which his companion was obliged to interpret for him.

Although it was the design of Villiers to wile away a vacant hour or two, should these chance

till the arrival of De Chaulnes, it by no means lay within the scope of his condescension to quarrel with a man so much his inferior in every quality befitting a gentleman, as he believed, perhaps unjustly, Mr. Gibbons to be. No: he might "use him for his laughter;" but to bandy low words with him, to wrangle, to brawl in a gaming-house, and then to sully the brightness of his sword with the plebeian puddle of the man of law, never once entered his imagination. He would drink with, and ridicule him, as long as he found such occupation convenient or pleasurable : but immediately he ceased to feel the otherwise fearful current of his thoughts diverted from its course, that instant he would quit his society. Yet, in truth, fatigue, want of sleep, of nourishment, biting remorse for sums lost, and excitement of different kinds, not unadded to by the sternness of Lord Stair's rebuke, had driven him almost to despair; and there were moments on that evening when a slight provocation would have o'ermastered the resolutions of forbearance with which he had armed himself against what he deemed the impertinence of Gibbons, and, in a fit of short-lived madness, he might have run the offender through the heart.

Of Gibbons, or his connection, real or pretended, with the bank, which, in failing, had drawn upon its partners such general execration, we do not, in this place, mean to furnish a history; uninteresting as it would prove, and inconsequential to the purpose of our narrative. It is enough to remark that Lord Stair had caused him to be liberated, but too glad to wash his hands of all unnecessary detail at such a time; and, to remunerate him for the loss of baggage, he had privately sent a sum of money which he imagined would prove equivalent thereto: his wound, also, was a mere flesh one, and, though sufficiently painful, not of the very great importance he would, at an earlier period, have given Villiers to believe.

The champagne was not without its effect; but, instead of binding heart to heart, or laying open the secrets and dismissing the enmity of each, wine had here a more potent, though not unusual, influence: it excited a rivalry of temper, each priding himself upon shewing how far he could withstand the bitter taunts of the other without breaking forth into absolute hostility.

Both were clever men, now brightened with the glass, and raised to a pitch of Pythic enthusiasm by the very peculiar situation in which they were relatively placed, independently of the single position of Villiers; and the jest, trenchant as a shrewd Damascus blade on the part of this, violent and stinging as the bound and bite of an adder on that of Gibbons, raised the very springtide of their gall until it nearly burst its bounds; but again the flood subsided, and the keen encounter of their wit turned and led them towards a not less dangerous shore,—it was that of play.

There was defiance added to taunt; there was mighty temptation to a favourite pursuit; and, as though he knew the absolute truth, there was a doubt thrown out by Gibbons if the money he boasted was that of Villiers, or the property of his master. The word was enough,—all his high blood mounted into a flame; and, with a glad shout of fury, as the second bottle waned, he set himself to the grateful task of ruining his opponent.

If winning every louis that Gibbons had about him could be so styled,—if lending him back part of his own, stripping him again of that, his diamond ring, his watch, every thing that pertained to him, in short, could constitute the fulness of sense to such a phrase, Villiers quickly accomplished the ruin of his adversary. The exquisite tact, the superior play which at each moment of the game he shewed, was such as Gibbons had never before been exposed to, and his rage at losing was proportionate to the confidence with which he started, designing but to win and triumph. His play was good, but merely nothing in the scale against the finished foreign science of Villiers, who, be it said, had never yet descended to avail himself of any superiority from unfair usage. With all his brilliant talent, he had, with but few exceptions, experienced through a life of gaming the worst possible runs of luck, and these, combined with honesty, rendered him an unequal match for the nefarious gamesters of Paris and other places: hence his own ruin.

Having made him a beggar, as he believed, Villiers rose, and for a minute stood piercing his late adversary with an eagle glance of exultation. He laughed lowly as the other almost tore his hair, and allowed him to exhaust every expletive in the vocabulary of injurious reproach. Then, taking from his pocket the whole that he had won, he thrust it over to the astonished Gibbons with disdain. Scarcely, as yet, comprehending what he meant, wonder had turned the frantic man into the stillness of marble; but, with a laugh almost hysterical, he quickly grasped that wealth he had the moment before imagined lost for ever, yet still seemed to hesitate whether he should reclaim the whole.

"Take it," cried Villiers, fiercely, "take your vile trash." Think you that I will use your hard-gotten money? Take it without fear—without scruple. Go; and henceforth beware whom you accuse of dishonesty."

This was false glory in Villiers; yet, if it intoxicated, it served him also for a space; but too long he staid to gloat upon the man whom he had humbled, and a second challenge, with a glistening heap dashed down, once more rivetted him to the spot. Confident of success, he became careless, he lost his play and his temper; his luck took its ancient turn; he was himself the beggar that an hour before had seen Gibbons. Ruin had come noiselessly upon him with its stealthy step, and before he thought his wealth half gone, he demanded to double the whole stake before lost, when behold the money of De Chaulnes had fairly vanished—fairly; and, with the countenance rather of a glutted tiger than a human being, Gibbons now held his winnings up before Villiers, and nearly thrust them in his face.

"Did not I say I would be revenged?" screamed he, with a devilish laugh.

But the victim of his own weakness heard him not. Glaring aghast upon vacancy as he rose, his thoughts crowded back on the brain with fearful rapidity: he remembered the last speech of Stair; he remembered his ruined reputation with a patron whom he loved; he remembered his wife, who, through all the long career of dissipation, had still believed him honourable; his son too, who, when he grew up, would learn to scoff at and abhor a parent void of shame: he thought of all this, and despair seized him. Raising his clenched hands to his forehead, he rushed wildly out into the obscurity of night, and yielded up life to the destroying angel.

Charles - Labore - minor

before talling and control would

CHAPTER VI.

Avec les grands-parens, il y a un point délicat à ménager; c'est l'article succession.

ANON.

And now a long farewell to France,—long, and perhaps for ever! Land where the tree of jealousy, planted of old between two mighty nations, so near in place, and, save a thirst of fame, so distant in all things else, still flourishes with its ancient pride, farewell! What, though a brilliant blossom decks its boughs,—the bitter fruit of rivalry may yet hang thereon. What, though the link of friendship be strong to view,—that link may soon prove rusted to the heart, and Gaul, another "star in the same hemisphere," play Hotspur to our Hal!

But at the time of which we treat there was small risk of such: the glory of the Grand Monarque had frothed and frittered itself away; he had died full of years and honours, and, having achieved the beggary of his country, left it to incipient revolution. Mais, vogue la galere, et vive la bagatelle! With Orleans Master of the Revels, and Maurepas Minister of Marine, once more farewell to France*!

Our history now takes an onward flight of some years, when the son of the unhappy man who so suddenly closed his career in the last chapter must be introduced, a well-grown youth of eighteen, with much of his father's promise as to spirit, and as few of his vices as may reasona-

[&]quot;As a rival maritime nation, England was bounden in a debt of gratitude to the Regent of France, if only for appointing the Comte de Maurepas to this high station at the age of seventeen—an office given to him for the good services of his father. Maréchal Villars, Governor of Toulon, relates that, visiting his government, by chance, during Maurepas' administration, he found thirty sail of the line, some of them three-dockers of 120 guns, abandoned to neglect and decay. "The natural result," he very justly observes, "of giving such an appointment to a child."

bly be looked for,—a leaning towards dissipation, and a few college *escapades*, being passed over with a friendly smile.

Mr. Villiers, the father, obliged soon after marriage to leave England on account of pecuniary difficulties, had never seen his son. The delicate health of his wife, and, moreover, the situation he filled about the person of Stair at the Court of Versailles, were bars to their living together. Ostensibly a man of large fortune, he was virtually ruined before he sought, by marrying the daughter and heiress of Lord Beaulieu, to repair his shattered circumstances. By every means in his power, but chiefly through play, he had reduced himself so low as almost to be in absolute want, when his former friend offered him the appointment of confidential secretaryfor there are secretaries who by no means possess the confidence of their chiefs-which he was fain to accept, after having run out not only a very handsome fortune of his own, but the whole that had come to him with his wife.

The oaks of a century had mostly fallen, as it were, to celebrate the attainment of his majoritythe axe had long ceased to sound where the woods once towered proudly in the gale-houses and lands melted from the prodigal hand of the spendthrift, and sums had vainly been bestowed by his father-in-law, later in life, to rescue the gamester from his doom. Promise upon promise, fragile as the earliest crust of winter's ice, and goodly in all seeming as the surface of the lake it mantles, was given with less pain than it had been exacted, before Lord Beaulieu paid heaps of debt, and supplied the crying necessities of one whom, as the husband of his daughter, he could not help regarding even after he had ceased to respect. But we have beheld their retribution, and let us draw a veil over his errors.

The fatherless had not told ten years when he became doubly an orphan in the loss of her in whom, with his affections, life was nearly knit up. Yet of such deprivations will the human heart recover.

If paternal love and tenderness could atone for the bereavement, the young Charles Villiers assuredly met this consolation from Lord Beaulieu; nor is it surprising that there should subsist in him an excess of affection for the child of her upon whom he had doated almost to idolatry.

At Eton our hero had learned much Greek, and, with the aid of a good ear and natural talent, had been fortunate enough to pick up some chance English, which, at an English public school, is not a thing of infallible consequence; but, through whatever means, he had acquired an elegance of diction, an apt choice of words, a grace of manner, and an ease of expressing himself in society, that young men, years his seniors, failed to know. With excellent abilities, but a taste that clung rather to the arts than the sciences, to the study of belles lettres rather than that peculiar to the schools, it required all the authority of a tutor endowed with full powers to keep him up to his reading. Yet a disposition to gaiety, and a winning endearment in his manner, rendered tact and caution necessary in drawing the young student forward in his academic course at Cambridge.

Through this it is not our intention to follow him; but we must introduce Charles Villiers to the reader during a vacation, on the morning after his arrival at Burnel Royal, the fine old place of Lord Beaulieu, which he had not visited since his induction at college, but where he had spent the happy years of childhood, as well as his holidays from Eton. The good Peer, deeply read and thoroughly classic himself, looked for the same acquirements in his grandson, who, differing in opinion as to the necessity of plodding for years over the musty ancients, believed his handsome person and appearance too presentable to become the spoil of over-study, or the consequent prey of consumption, to which he had, even in his short time, seen so many fall victims.

"Here," said Lord Beaulieu, smiling, as they entered the library together after breakfast,— "here you will find what books you may want to assist in your pursuits after knowledge: stay, this key lets you into the Greeks, and this to the Latins, your more particular compartments. You will meet all your old friends from Homer and Euripides to Virgil and Ovid. There, you know your way. You see I keep them carefully preserved."

"I should imagine that this was a part of the library the least likely to be assailed," replied the Cambridge student, carelessly opening a volume that lay upon the table near him.

"Ah, I thought this would catch your eye; nay, you need not shut it up; I do not prohibit your touch," said the Baron, putting on his spectacles, and regarding with delight a superbedition of Sophocles that had just issued from the press. "Is it not magnificent?" continued he.

"Immensely fine, I have no doubt," said Charles, whose attention was, however, directed to the last sparkling work of Fielding. "I will answer for the safety of your Greek phalanx, while you keep these light troops to divert the enemy." But Lord Beaulieu was too intent, by this time, upon the beautiful type, and the fine paper, the marginal notes, and the splendid binding of his new treasure, to attend further, for the next five minutes, to his grandson. At length his contemplation was distracted by a certain sibilation—for it could not be termed whistling—on the part of Charles, that gave evidence of his thoughts not being classically turned that morning.

"When you wish for the relaxation," said the Baron, "you will find your instruments and your Euclid in their old place."

"Defend me, sir, at present, from any such horrors!" exclaimed Charles. "Parallelopipeds would put me in a fever—I should die in the attempt to demonstrate the forty-seventh proposition; and, for the Pons Asinorum, I have, it is to be hoped, passed that bridge of sighs for the last time. But if you tell me to bag you some certain brace of partridges, or put your chesnut over a five-barred gate; or, if you would

say, 'Charles, pink me that key-hole across the room with your rapier, or split me a ball upon your penknife,' why, I think, sir, I am the man that can do it."

"Stuff," said Lord Beaulieu, emphatically, as he put his head almost into the face of his grandson, and continued looking at him for a few seconds. "I fear you are very idle at Cambridge; and these visits with your friend Manners to the Duke's are bringing you too soon into a sort of thing that it will be time enough for you to think of long after you leave college."

"Which I cordially hope may be next year," replied Charles.

"Had not Mr. Ludlow given me a tolerable account of you—when you could be prevailed on to apply yourself, at least,—I should say, no: indeed, I fear, as it is, that you will never do him or me much credit; for yourself, I believe you have no ambition whatever."

"Not that way, certainly. I do hate it so.

But, my dear grandfather, I have read myself to death nearly, and worked harder than any ten men there."

"Oh, oh," cried Lord Beaulieu, smiling, and holding up his finger: "you are but just turned of eighteen, recollect. I want to send you abroad, however, as soon as possible. It is unfortunate that we are now always at war, or on the point of going. It is the ruin, the positive ruin of all the young men of the present day, their not being able to get abroad. I expect to see them soon leaving their hats at the door as they come into a room, forgetting their canes or their wigs, or committing some extravagance of the kind. Whatever you do, let me have no falling in love—no more about the miller's daughter either,—mind me: no falling in love, or any such folly. It is time to think of marrying at sixty."

"You did not wait so long, sir," said Charles.

"I was a fool, and—stay, my dear boy: you will knock down that cabinet if you lean against it,—if you meet with a woman of your own rank,

with money, and connexions suitable to your own, and who may be of service to you, then, perhaps, marry; but no hoity-toity, flaunting, hoydenish miss: and let me hear no more of your college flirtations—I believe that is the new phrase: in my time it was confined to flirting a fan."

"What think you of Lady Juliana Upton, sir?" said Charles, with a grave face.

" Psha!"

"Or Lady Jemima Featherspring? or Lady Betty Brompton? or—"he could have cited up a host of names, each, as he knew, less and less calculated to meet his grandfather's approbation.

"Charles, I am not fond of being trifled with," said the Baron: "this is one of your old tricks. All I tell you is—no falling in love."

"I am quite safe in these quarters," said he.

"And above all," continued his grandfather, "never let me hear of any match between you and your cousin Viola Myddleton, who is, I hear, turning out pretty."

- "Why, sir?"
- "Because she is the grand-daughter of a low person, that is why—a cloth-merchant, sir, that is why."
 - " And niece of a baron."
 - " None of mine ; I have never owned her."
- " How can you help-yourself, sir?"
- "No more of this; —her mother chose to marry a man so much beneath her."
- " With five good thousands a-year."
- "And a red coat; never let me hear of your putting on a red coat, unless you are starving—then indeed."
- "He does not seem very warlike, sir, or very much of an Adonis—what could have possessed my aunt to marry him?"
- "Your aunt!—He wore a red coat, which was quite enough for her; besides, he was handsome, as a young man—very handsome."
- "But, sir, if his veins ran cochineal and indigo, or he was made of fullers' earth instead

of porcelain, what did it signify, if he had money?"

"Boy, boy, no more of this," said the Baron, impatiently. "You sometimes try me a little too far;—take care, Charles, a fit of the gout may be too hard for you yet."

"Tira la la!" hummed his grandson, as he turned away, and settled his cravat at a looking-glass, while his cane dangled from a jewelled finger, set off by the most expensive lace ruffle that London could produce.

"Come with me, while I think of it," said Lord Beaulieu, leading his young companion into a room that had been his mother's favourite retreat, furnished after the fashion of a score of previous years,—this was in 1735,—with piles of china, japan screens, rich cabinets, and costly jars—some standing upon claw tables, others flanked by marble slabs with gilt and fluted legs; while the dark wainscotting was relieved by chairs of crimson satin, trimmed with gold

brocade, and the most fantastic in shape that the Gillow of the period could devise.

"Here is your mother's picture, Charles," said the Baron, taking it from a cabinet drawer; these diamonds are almost too valuable to be trusted to so careless a boy; but it was my poor girl's request that you should have it, as soon as I thought you old enough to appreciate its value, I do not mean as a jeweller, but as a son. Preserve that as the apple of your eye," continued he, giving it to him. "I trust you never may be starving; but, before you turn these diamonds into bread, I would almost rather you indeed put on a red coat."

Charles placed the miniature reverently in his bosom.

"Now," pursued Lord Beaulieu, "I have never stinted you as to money, because I was willing to try your character, whether niggardly or the reverse. I hate a niggard; but I really think you have lately been much too extravagant. Do you play?" " Never," said Charles.

"Touch but a card, and you lose my favour for ever," said Lord Beaulieu.

"I never will," was the reply—a promise that perhaps had less merit in being kept, as it was, through life, from the absence of any inclination to break it on the part of him by whom it was made.

"And now, as we dine at two, you had better take your ride; but I advise no five-barred gates, especially upon the old chesnut.

The vacation passed away; and the heir presumptive to the property, though not the title of Lord Beaulieu, returned to college. Nor was the pride of expectancy wanting to the sanguino boy; for, in the enthusiasm of the moment, he could almost fancy that the gilded vanes of the light minarets, glittering in the morning sun as he departed, turned their brilliant points towards him as the future master of all that wide domain, with its changing scene of field and forest glade.

A few months passed, during which there was a renewal of the visits to the miller's daughter, whom his fellow collegians declared he would marry if not prevented; and though late, the tutor's attention was directed to his pupil's haunts, while a due report of his conduct was made to the Baron. The danger might not have been pressing, but the circumstance drew from Lord Beaulieu a severe reproach; and his imprudent grandson wrote some high and mighty letters of justification, by which he succeeded in alienating the old lord's affections from him. Cambridge was left, and Charles retired, as he called it, to London for the season, where, as the heir of Burnel Royal, he did not want friends, or whatever society he wished to come amongst. A course of dissipation was entered into, to support which he drew largely upon his grandfather, and his drafts were honoured during life; but the offended Baron steadfastly adhered to his determination of never seeing one who had added impertinence to disobedience. And bitterly was Charles doomed to feel the effects of these; for, while he played a distinguished part about town, the gayest of the gay, precocious and accomplished, the best dancer, the first swordsman, graceful, talented, and twenty-one, Lord Beaulieu died, and left him without a shilling.

CHAPTER VII.

Adam.—Come not within these doors, under this roof
The enemy of all thy graces lives.

Orlando.—What, would'st thou have me go and beg my food,
Or, with a base and boisterous sword, enforce
A thievish living on the common road?

SHAKSPEARE.

A WILL, it appeared from the date, had been made by Lord Beaulieu, immediately after the Cambridge affair, leaving all his worldly possessions to Mrs. Myddleton, the sister, towards whom he had expressed himself with so much inveteracy. Many years younger than her brother, she had, in childhood, and as she grew up, been treated by him rather like a daughter; and in despite of a temper which nearly set at defiance all the charitable forbearance, all the liberality and kindness of her senior relative,

he remained attentive, generous, and even affectionate, till thwarted in a favourite design, ridiculous as it might be, of bestowing her on an ancient friend and bachelor, who perhaps little desired the match, when he became more intimately acquainted with the lady's disposition.

After a few tears to the memory of one whom he sincerely and tenderly loved, Charles began to calculate the probable amount of the Myddletons' income, and the chances that remained of his obtaining "something handsome" from them; "or perhaps," he thought, "Lord Beaulieu may have left some paper that will yet come to light, by which I shall be sure of a subsistence; for at present I am a beggar—a positive beggar!" and he laughed at the idea—the true nature of his situation not yet having burst upon him; for no man thinks himself ruined all at once.

"Let me see," he resumed, as he threw himself back in his chair, and sought assistance in his calculations from the gilded cornice of the ceiling. "Let me see; there is about five thousand a-year—that is, five thousand of their own; then there is the Cornwall property, seven, and the lead mine in Durham—and the small property in Gloucestershire—and Burnel Royal, which is not to be despised,—with, I suppose, about a hundred thousand in the funds, &c., &c., &c., which will make not far from thirty-two thousand a-year—not to mention the New Inn on Hounslow Heath! What could have possessed my grandfather to purchase that! Well, I will put up with the Cornwall tinmines, or—come, Gloucestershire, one must have a conscience:—next week for the Grange, ho!"

In effect, he wrote to his great aunt a short but extremely polite epistle, announcing his intention of making the visit in a few days, and putting in some civil sayings in respect of her daughter.

His eyes soon became more widely open to the approaching crisis in affairs; and money must be had, he was well aware, to enable him to keep that place in society which had given him consideration and pretension as the heir of Lord Beaulieu, but which, when it was discovered that he had not a shilling, he was likely to lose forthwith. Moreover, he had indulged in various conceits and airs of high breeding, which in a monied man are tolerated by force and the custom of the world, but which procure a needy one the disadvantage of being thrust from society. These before many weeks he saw fit to abandon. It is probable, therefore, that his disinheritance ultimately proved a benefit to him; though the force of this argument it were hard to insist upon his immediately acceding to.

Mrs. Myddleton, with her husband and daughter, was seated at the breakfast-table when the letters were brought in at the Grange, on that particular morning which was fruitful of the important circumstance of a despatch from Charles Villiers.

" Miracles will never cease!" was the equally new and sagacious remark of the elder lady, as

she placed the letter on the table after reading it. Her husband, who was not reputed to want sense, except as regarded the very common folly of marrying for connexion at the expense of happiness, sat reading his Daily Advertiser without answering; for he well knew by experience that the slightest reply, even in accordance, would bring on the argumentum ad hominem, which he had no desire to hear. He had the discretion, therefore, to remain in a state of unarmed neutrality, as his wife commenced a conversation with the fair Viola, now growing up to woman's estate, and from respect and affection to part of herself, subjected only to a slackened fire from the maternal battery; a line of conduct on the gentleman's side which, like most neutralities of the kind, by no means saved him from partial injury, when the stronger power was not minded to be otherwise engaged.

[&]quot; Hopeful youth!"

[&]quot;Who, mamma?"

[&]quot; Your cousin, Mr. Charles."

" What of him?"

"He is coming here, intending to honour us with his society for a few days."

Viola's eyes brightened at the anticipation of such company, little of any sort being seen at the dull Grange since the day that its mistress quarrelled with her last friend in the neighbourhood. To be sure, Charles had as a boy been sufficiently rude; but well might she divine that other conduct than that of boxing her ears and throwing her tea-things into the fire would distinguish a young gentleman whose name had sent its renown even to the seclusion of shire: for the finish of his breeding, and the gallant turn which his demeanour with the fair had taken since he came out upon the world, a brilliant but an evanescent meteor of fame and fashion, had made the reputation of the young heir to thirty thousand a-year of consequence to most lady-mothers, even to the astute and Beaulieu-hating Mrs. Myddleton; though it might now only as far as the care of keeping

him aloof from her daughter have its effect upon the matron.

"I fancy he is much improved," hazarded Viola.

"There was immensity of room for it," replied her mother. "At twelve years old he was the most forward, rude, disagreeable boy that I ever met with. I cannot think how my poor brother bore with him so long."

"Yes, at twelve, my dear mother; but he is now twenty-one."

Viola feared she had said too much, and she was not wrong in her surmise; for, after regarding her with well-feigned astonishment, till the blush that covered her cheeks rivalled the china rose in her girdle, or any other unhacknied subject of comparison, Mrs. Myddleton broke forth.

"Pretty well, I really think, for a young lady of nineteen! So you absolutely think yourself a competent judge of men's merits already, and set up your own opinion against your mother's! One thing, however, I beg you to observe, which is, that I desire there may be no encouragement on your part to any renewal of childish friendships, and all that sort of impertinent absurdity, which marked his conduct towards you when he spent those unhappy holidays here, during your poor uncle's first illness."

" Friendship!" said Viola, " my dear mother, I could not bear him."

"Bear and forbear," said Mr. Myddleton, unconsciously catching the word, as he roused himself from a brown study, during the enjoyment of which he had believed that he was calculating the national debt.

"What is that, Mr. Myddleton?"

No answer.

"Bear, you may well say," exclaimed his wife. "Mr. Myddleton," in a louder tone, "pray give me your attention for a moment: your—that is, my nephew, or great nephew, rather, is about to condescend to pay you a visit. I suppose you must be civil to him."

" I suppose so."

"Although he did not choose to know you last year in town."

"I fancy he did not really recollect me; and if he did it is no matter."

"I believe he has been most extravagant," continued his wife, and probably wants you to do something for him,—or rather me. By the bye, could not you get him out to the West Indies in a marching regiment?"

" Could not you?" said Mr. Myddleton.

"I!—Will you talk sense, my very facetious sir? There is a secret expedition about to be sent out."

"It will not sail for a year or two; besides, that is more in your line, Mary, my dear, if it be a secret one."

"When you have done with your folly, I will proceed; in the mean time, I must beg you ever to remember that you are addressing a woman of condition, and not a darry-maid. By the bye, I forgot to ask if there was any thing in that

stupid paper of yours about a house. Leicester Fields will no longer do for us; and you must, or I rather shall, look a little nearer towards St. James's. Lord T.—'s will do for us, if we decide upon taking it before there is a reaction, or any further change of ministry."

"My Daily Advertiser a stupid paper!" said Mr. Myddleton, as to himself; "put in comparison, probably, with 'The Small Talk,' or 'The Lady's Looking-Glass,' or 'The Mirror of Scandal."

"Yes, you would see your own face there, my very sapient sir, if you were of sufficient consequence. Come, Viola, we will leave this sociable gentleman to his newspaper and his cold coffee," concluded Mrs. Myddleton, sailing out of the room, accompanied by her daughter.

As she stopped for a moment in the hall, and beheld the graceful figure of Viola and the dark sparkle of her eye, her bosom knew the pride of maternal tenderness; her fingers carefully replacing a particular ringlet which had transgressed its bounds, and which, be it said, Viola shook back again in five minutes after, loosening the ribbon with which her mother now busied herself in tying up the truant dark glossy tresses.

What were that mother's thoughts, as resting for the moment with a hand poised on the neck of her daughter, while with the other she sustained the rustling and voluminous folds of her own dress, let parents who have beautiful daughters task themselves to explain: it is not for us to fancy the shades of ambition, the forms of coronets that passed over the mind of Mrs. Myddleton on this occasion. But quickly changing the expression of her face into one of dissatisfaction, she exclaimed, almost unconsciously, "Your father's horrid nose!" and turned away.

Now this nose, Grecian rather than rétroussé, was certainly any thing but horrid; yet it was her father's, and that was sufficient to stamp it with deformity in the eyes of one who had long ceased to love a husband she had never

respected,—a husband, who, possessing wealth, sought family connexion, and sacrificed a life which, with many estimable points of disposition, he might have passed happily in the society of a woman more suited to him in mind, temper, and rank, than her he had so unfortunately found. To return, however, to the nose of Viola, it was part of as lovely a face, destitute as this might be of regularity in point of feature, as any that, with or without the reputation of belonging to a great heiress, was likely to break its score of hearts a season.

Booted, spurred, and splashed, Charles entered the drawing-room at the appointed time, and was graciously received by Mrs. Myddleton. He talked and laughed for an hour, rattling on till his aunt was pleased with him in spite of a determination to the contrary. But this was a momentary brightening; like the gleams of favour which Fortune, that fickle goddess, sheds upon the doomed host that she intends shall ultimately be broken in the fight. A young lady sat with

her back towards him at an embroidery frame, and had as yet not spoken; but whether she dropped a stitch as he entered, or had once looked round to scan the altered tout ensemble of the formerly disagreeable boy, it is of little consequence now to inquire. He asked for his cousin, and Mrs. Myddleton called Viola to be introduced, who, advancing with due precision, made the most graceful of curtsies, and retired once more by a signal from her mother. But Charles thought he could perceive something of the good-humoured mischief of old lurking beneath the downcast lid, and round the corners of her mouth, as she turned away; yet, although she had never heard of such a thing, she felt much of that sort of influence which the vicinity of an iceberg may be supposed to produce, when in her mother's presence: for Viola unrestrained, and Miss Myddleton in company, were two very different beings.

"It is a sad affair, this Grange," sighed Charles, as he retired for the night. "I shall not be able to get through three days of it, do what I may; and that fair cousin of mine is not to be borne,she is a very stick! A very stick, indeed!" concluded he, as, with a desperate yawn, he extinguished his candle, and resigned his willing senses to the care of the sleep-inducing god; while, unromantic as it may seem, and heroine of the tale as Viola must, ere this, have been known, her image visited not his dreams, nor further employed his waking thoughts till, having fixed a diamond brooch in his laced cravat, and arranged his ruffles, the next morning, he thought of the impression his fresh untravelled appearance might make, and, with an approving last glance in the mirror, prepared to descend to the breakfast-room.

And a few days passed without much communication between the cousins, when the young gentleman found the Grange less insupportable, and the lady discovered that what she had at first taken for pride, conceit, reserve, and so forth, put on by her fine relation upon the occasion of a

country visit, was merely his peculiar way,-a delicacy, a high manner, which she rather admired than disliked, for the contrast it presented to that which had marked his conduct towards her when both were little removed from childhood. This, we may well believe, was a false idea on the part of Viola, the effect of an excited fancy, which, not unwilling to behold every thing as good in one whom a secret impulse told her she began highly to esteem, cherished what in another she would have hated, and admired that which she had in an indifferent person despised. But, in truth, Charles had hitherto been playing a part, the policy of which was extremely doubtful, inasmuch as his intention was by so doing to raise his consequence in the opinion of the Myddletons, and thus, when his negotiation for a settlement should at length be adventured upon, preclude the chance of any contemptible sum being offered, which, in the high and mighty tone he had assumed, it was decided that he would reject; for not only to Viola, but towards her parents,

also had this demeanour been observed. But in young men it is difficult to preserve a coldness not natural to them. There is a fire within, which all their powers, however confidently assumed or boldly seconded, are sure to melt before,—a fire latent in every youthful breast, and which, despite of all resistance, will at one time break forth to the detriment or reverse of the possessor's happiness, as the asperity or smoothness of his destiny may will.

But let it not be thought that this is a tale of love, merely. Though such shall and must ever have its effect on the circumstances of man's life, it has small chance of becoming frequently a fostered or a favourite theme as we run through the history of Charles Villiers, whose passion, indeed, was not likely to lead him into those extravagances which common every-day lovers are so often prone to. Senatorial dignity was his darling ambition: one, nevertheless, that, with all the desire or talent he might possess, was most unlikely to be gratified without local

Which of these was the first he desired to obtain there is not much doubt; for, with a certain proportion of wealth, and an inherent degree of sense and ability, the rest would follow.

But time and chance laugh at our schemes, and overturn all our favourite projects. For the present, however, let us attend only to that which is before us—in its own hour comes the evil or the good.

Day after day passed, and Mrs. Myddleton wondered when her great nephew was to take his departure, or whether he intended altogether to establish his residence at the Grange. Rides and walks, excursions hither and thither, were powerfully lessening the reserve and distance that had first marked the conduct of the young people, and as the third person was only an ancient groom, there was little restraint upon their conversation, which became, by degrees, more of that tender and expressive kind than what is usually designated by the term friendly.

Each evening was, nevertheless, conscious of a lecture, or rather a caution from mother to daughter; and as, to save appearances, or prevent the overthrow of all her present pleasurable occupations, new to her as they were, Viola, not too innocently perhaps, led her parent to believe that Charles was and would continue an object of the most supreme indifference to her. Passion, then, if passion really existed anywhere, could only be on the other part.

The third week of his sojourn had nearly come to a close before Charles could bring himself to undertake the celebrated stroke of diplomacy, which he had left London for the purpose of playing off. He built but little on the probability of a failure; but, as certainty of success could scarcely be said to exist, he feared to tempt the chance of breaking off suddenly that communion with Viola,—from which he derived a new and infinitely superior pleasure,—to any that he had met with in the more sophisticated mode of life pursued for the last two years, with all its

glitter and excitement, all its hollowness and pride.

Charles had, a patient victim, allowed himself to be three times led over the farm, amongst ploughed fields and through miry lanes. He had commended Mr. Myddleton's improvements; he had eulogized his pigeon-house; he had fallen into raptures at a sun-dial, which had also the ingeniously-contrived property of telling the wind's direction; he had seen, and not only seen, the various breeds of hog; he had felt the oxen, and patted the tame bull, from which last-named uncertain animal, who had particular days when he was not "as quiet as a lamb," Charles had mainly assisted Mr. Myddleton to save his life by dragging him over a high paling; and all these things were not forgotten by his host.

But their effect on the lady of the mansion cannot be supposed as very great, and, at the end of his third week, Villiers received so direct a hint from her, that he was constrained to make arrangements for his departure. He would ride with Viola first, and then screw all his courage to the point of attack upon financial subjects,—a last dinner, a last evening, and at the next dawn start for London, nor look back, nor pull bitt, till certain that distance had shut out from view the house which contained so much of opposite,—all to hate and all to love—an aconite and its panacea,—in a word, the mother of Viola and Viola's self.

The groom thought this last ride strangely prolonged; but what, during its continuance, were the subjects of discussion between those whom he attended, in compassion to his hungry feelings we will not venture to surmise. Viola blushed as she looked at her watch on their return; and immediately quickening her pace, with Charles by her side, she rode at a gallop up to the hall-door, and, quickly dismounting, retired to her room to prepare for dinner.

Hesitating which to address, for he found both still in their morning costume as he entered the drawing-room, with flushed faces and eyes turned away from each other as if some hot argument had been under dispute, Villiers sat down between his aunt and her husband in no very enviable mood. After a few moments' silence, during which Mr. Myddleton writhed in his chair under the influence of some most uncomfortable feeling as it seemed, his amiable spouse opened a conversation with her nephew.

"I have never told you since your arrival, Mr. Charles," said she, "for it pains me to advert to any thing connected with my poor brother, that he did not depart without remembering you."

"I was not aware, madam," observed Charles, much relieved by being thus agreeably met upon a subject nearest his heart, "I was not aware, madam, that my name had been mentioned in the will."

"Not in the will, you mistake me—that is, you prevent my explaining:—a short time before Lord Beaulieu left his sorrowing friends and relatives, he charged me to pay you an annuity,

by word of mouth, you understand,—no instrument exists to compel such."

"I understand, madam," said Charles, immediately raising his expectations to an unreasonable height, and bowing assent to Mrs. Myddleton's argument.

The master of the house rose from his chair, and fidgetted successfully enough with a cutglass girandole on the chimney-piece,

"I was sure you would understand," said Mrs. Myddleton, with a smile of encouragement: "you know that you never had reason to suppose you would be left any thing."

Charles bowed, but spoke not.

"And," continued she, "your good sense, high feeling, and—and knowledge of the world—"

A bow at each pause from her nephew, who began, however, to feel rather uncomfortable; his visions of property falling swiftly down the scale from Cornwall to Gloucestershire.

"Your correct judgment, sense of honour, and

economical principles—" this last was somewhat too hard upon the sufferer, and his aunt was fain to disguise the smile she could not help playing about her mouth, by turning away her head, and taking an immoderate pinch of snuff.

"All these," pursued she, sitting up and addressing him with starched formality—"all these you have been so renowned for, that it will cost you less pain than it would most other young men, when I tell you that your grandfather named the sum of —"

Charles turned pale, and gasped for breath, while Mr. Myddleton became as additionally nervous as his wife was steady and inflexible.

"Fifty pounds a year," concluded she.

Down came the girandole, and as the fragments flew over the polished oak floor, the hapless author of the mischief fled the scene.

"Fifty pounds a year, madam!" cried Charles, in amazement. "Fifty pounds a year!—Why I might as well, aye, better far, have gone into the church. I should at least have had the living

of Stonyland cum Bogmoor.—Why, even a poord curate is as well off."

"It is not too late yet," quietly observed Mrs."
Myddleton.

"Yes, madam, but it is too late! Surely, surely, there must be some mistake here. My grandfather could never have left me in this miserable condition. Madam, madam—"

A Sir, I am extremely obliged to you for your insinuations; but, as regards the annuity, you are perfectly at liberty to let it rest where it is, in my hands: there will be no compulsion, I assure you."

"Compulsion, madam !—At liberty, madam !— Why, what am I to do?"

"Really I do not know," said Mrs. Myddleton, rising calmly, and moving towards the door; "but perhaps you would like to make some alteration in your dress before dinner?" And she left the room in much state.

"Dinner!" exclaimed Charles, walking up and down in a towering passion; "dinner!—I think I

have already got enough to digest. I will leave this house instantly. Why do I stay here to be insulted?" and he rang the bell with violence.

But before the tardy servant came to answer it, Viola entered, dressed and smiling, her heart in that inexplicable state of agitation that impresses us with a sense of happiness; yet of what sort, or why it should be accompanied with one of fulness, almost amounting to fear, even should we dare to ask, we have not the hardihood to attempt a definition. Perhaps at this moment she appeared more lovely, more interesting, in the eyes of Villiers, than she had ever hitherto done, or yet ever than she ever afterwards might be held. They had pledged their hearts' faithto each other, and now, when all her own feelings seconded the wishes of Charles, he saw, as he believed, an insuperable bar to the possession of her hand; for he was a beggar! He delighted in the reiteration of the word, as Viola asked for explanation, and, in the excitement this caused, forgot that he had rung the bell was not a minwob "My horses!" cried he to the astonished servant.

"Now, sir?"

"No," interposed Viola, firmly; "Mr. Villiers will not go till to-morrow morning."

"To-morrow morning?" said Charles, trying to speak composedly.—" Yes, to-morrow morning."

"Even so soon, if you will," said Viola, as the man withdrew; "but not now, Charles, not now; you are scarcely yourself. Tell me—explain what has happened—our ride, it has proved disagreeable: forget it if you believe that—"

"Forget, Viola!—Disagreeable!—Are you too in league against me?—Nay, pardon, I meant not that.—Would it were not likely to prove the last we may ever take! Explain I cannot:—ask your mother; but believe all, all. My heart—I am mad!" concluded he, rushing from the room.

Dinner was unusually late that day, yet it was half over before Charles made his appearance; and, as may be conjectured, it was any thing but

a lively or pleasant meal. When her cousin at length took his place opposite to Viola, she felt the burning blush rise to her cheek, as if, a guilty one, she had committed some heinous crime. Conscience, indeed, was not all-approving. She dreaded to look up, lest her face should divulge the secret of her heart; but having kept her eyes cast down for a quarter of an hour, she raised them at length, and they rested almost unconsciously upon those of Charles, which they met and fixed. At the same moment Mrs. Myddleton glanced towards her daughter, and threw her into additional confusion. It was too late-the mischief was complete; an attachment had sprung up, and the happiness of Viola was sacrificed for ever .- For ever ?- Well might she deride such false speculations-such romantic Arcadianism. The days were gone when hearts broke, and attachments lasted through life! Nay, nay: well did that mother think small was the risk of any such catastrophe, once away from purling streams and greenwood tree,-or when the

foliage of Grosvenor-square should be the most that was familiar to her daughter's eye, with all the étalage of its palaces, and all the adulation of the youths that frequent them.

And Charles departed from the Grange.

mi more will provide to mentals beautiful some all sero to as

We have said that Mr. Myddleton was not forgetful of the service rendered him by his nephew, and it may occur to the reader that the annuity-scheme had birth with no other than himself, as, in fact, the mind of Lord Beaulieu was too far gone, when his sister was present before death, to communicate any such wish. Minute as he was in the presence of his more commanding spouse, he had an inborn benevolence of disposition, and though he often quailed before the grey twinkle of her snake-like eye, as if under the influence of some hateful fascination, on this occasion he succeeded, as we have seen, in eliciting her consent to allow Charles fifty pounds a year out of thirty thousand. He had originally named a much larger sum, but was beaten back to the pittance named: nor, when it is taken into consideration that Villiers was hitherto the undoubted heir to the whole property, will it be thought that such an epithet is unjust. Mr. Myddleton had taken the most likely method, as it was the most delicate, of offering the boon in a manner that would avoid all risk of hurting the feelings of the young man, unknowing of his purpose in the visit. or more gam a lana , wonleyer anneity-schone that theth with no other than simself, the melies the term in Land Beaulier Was 100 lar gone who is and present before death, to conjunuing any such wish Minute as the Avad in the question at his broate communicity species, he had no inhaze behavebeace of depositor, and cough he allow qualled below the gray tamble of her only-like my. as Strates the reduction of some based. Insernation, da this occasion he successful as we may some as shoon of the consent to allow Charles off a pounds. a year out of they thousand. He had aveginally named a much larger sung but was besten buck

CHAPTER VIII.

Titus. We wait for certain money here, sir.

Flavius. If money were as certain as your waiting,

'Twere sure enough.

TIMON OF ATHENS.

in oil waterland on the oil

"And this, then," said Villiers, as he sat by his lonely fire, and gazed at the changing forms it presented—"this is the type of all worldly hopes—a figure I had laughed at as a dream: now, how true a picture of life's vanity do I find it! Like this red mass of glowing towers, the glorious structure I had reared in my vain imagination has fallen to the earth a crumbling heap of ruins. Here end all my schemes of high ambition—all my visions of greatness—once extended as a vast and fertile plain, now burnt up and parched as a shrivelled scroll,—in

another instant, from the highest hope dashed down, vanished as the phasm of a heated slumber. The senate, thought I not once? The jail rather!" and he laughed bitterly a hollow laugh of despair. "Yet, no: before that last of earthly ills there is a sure resource. Dastard!" again cried he, rising suddenly, "shall I fly from life because an unprincipled old man makes me a beggar? Shall I rejoice the heart of a woman who hates me; and, in quitting the world, but consummate that which in her soul she would relinquish half her riches to accomplish? No, no, no! Charles Villiers, thou hast been a fool; but it shall not yet come to that! Better turn upon the scornful in such sort as will cause them wofully to rue the hour in which I was made an enemy: ave, hate the day with a tenfold hatred that gave me birth!"

There is nothing like a genuine heartfelt detestation in nerving up a man against the ills of the world,—nothing like that fierce hate of those we imagine to be the cause of our discomfiture. The principle is bad, and as such is to be lamented, but it is true and self-existent; and, moreover, all our philosophy is insufficient to overcome the feeling, although we may try to smother it, and even in appearance succeed. We hate as bitterly no less; and till time shall have assisted to exhaust, with its own vehemence, the bad passion that burns us up, we must suffer. It may be said that a Christian cannot know this feeling: doubtful. He will strive against the stirring demon within, he will forbear, he will die with the effort he shall make, or he will overcome the tempter; but feel he must.

And Villiers revelled in the idea that he had secured the affections of Viola; for—and it was a bad thought, but he was not all perfect—in marrying her he would still ultimately possess that fortune he had ever looked upon as his in perspective, and thus at once gratify both love and vengeance.

The sum he was henceforward to subsist on would, indeed, appear to so extravagant a youth,

barely sufficient to support nature; yet it was one on which the son of many a high-born gentleman has been fain to commence his way in a world cold, unpitying, and often sterile of return for the principal laid out-a principal made up of industry, of talent, of personal sacrifice, perhaps of health precious and never to be regained; nay, there is no equivalent return for that adventure, supposing the aim and ambition of the heart gratified to its utmost craving: still, often as the soil in which we sow the seed of labour is barren of the wished-for harvest, talent, perseverance, unwearied patience of the frowns of fortune, unvielding firmness in the resistance of her attacks, will lead and light the impoverished man to the summit of his glory, and place him first in real merit as in reputation, amongst those who have climbed the height by easier paths.

Not at first did this thought strike Villiers; nor indeed was it likely that, honestly and honourably disposed as he might be, in the common acceptation of those terms, and high-

H

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minded as we hope he may yet prove himself, he could, all at once, bring his haughty stomach to the resolution of daily labour, either of head or hand, for the needful staff of life. Neither must we think less charitably of him for accepting the supposed annuity of Lord Beaulieu through the hands of his aunt, a medium he hated, as it was but an alms, the whole considered, which he would have spurned, and begged to support existence rather than accept, had the truth ever flashed upon his mind.

This may, at a cursory view, be considered as scarcely reconcileable with his previous resolution, of seeking to share property with the Myddletons, to which he had no ostensible right; but the motive that should induce them to make over to him a part of that wealth, of which he was for years considered as the heir, would account for this facility. Besides, there was to be taken into consideration the value of the conveyance, the largeness of the gift, the

difference in quantity, making how great a difference in the world's opinion, in money transactions, amongst "honourable men," For example, do we not insult a person by offering him a paltry sum to aid?-but lend your acquaintance ten or twenty thousand pounds, and you rest perfectly certain that you have not risked his displeasure by an affront. Again, the same man fails or forgets to pay the lesser loan; and, pronouncing him a mean and dishonest knave, you deny him your countenance and society-you avoid all intercourse with so exceptionable a character. But let us ask, in what light does he stand who fails in the larger sum-it may be, he who has as little inclination as power to pay-and who manifests by his conduct as slight a desire to render his finances or circumstances capable of re-funding? Oh! he is merely an amiable roué—an extravagant but agreeable man, who is rather a person of consideration from the increased ratio of his dishonour,

Is not such the usage of the world;—is not such unjust estimate of reputation the general spring of our actions in the present constitution of society? By present, we do not wish to be understood as meaning that it was ever otherwise; but merely that it is just possible futurity may, in some million of years hence, pluck better fruit from the great tree of knowledge, when causes and effects shall be different, and the organization of the acts of mankind shall, from highest to lowest, have undergone a moral revolution.

Agree, then, that if such is the present usage of the world, Villiers, though we do not admit the world dishonour, must not be thought too harshly of in forming his notions by so common a standard. He could not at first help feeling the bitterness of all his disappointments, the comparative destitution of his state; and in a mind so sanguine, the reflections upon his fall did not fail to have a corresponding effect upon temper and disposition. His once gay and

happy laugh was quelled; and, for a time, a morbid asceticism took hold upon his mind, and shewed him as hateful, those things he had once believed himself unable to exist without.

"It has been a bright course," said he, "the little all of happy youth allowed me,—bright, yet too soon run—the goal too easily, too swiftly reached. And now, all the excitement over, where was the prize—what was it? Do I hold one pleasure it afforded me; or has the glad remembrance even of any one trait in my life, since boyhood, remained so strong as to foster a wish for its preservation? Nay, is there yet one object worth entering for again into the world, where, as a proud pauper, I should be in turn contemned?"

We will not attempt the answer to this last inquiry;—a rebound of the mind, which long after—aye, for years, still rang with all its exciting powers in the ear of fancy.

The worldly goods of Villiers went far to defray the debts he had thoughtlessly incurred. He sold off every thing, and made an equal division amongst his creditors.

His house was quitted for a more humble abode, and again for one more unpretending; yet, expense avoided, economy the most rigidly preserved could not keep him from periodical distress; and this was when his annuity failed, though long due, to be placed in the banker's hands, whom Mrs. Myddleton had appointed for its reception and payment: the more also to mortify him for whom it was remitted, a receipt was required for the sum before it left her hands; and this was to go through the banker, and of course be subject to a scrutiny, most galling and shameful to the sensitive being it relieved.

But we shall not accompany Villiers through all the unhappiness of many months that he passed while in this comparatively penniless state. Often had he tried to obtain some situation, not of absolute drudgery, but one that nevertheless required industry, and would, in

the salary that he earned, eke out his annuity, and assist to defray his debts while it supported himself. Such was not easy of attainment, to one who disdained to ask the recommendation of friends, or to give references for character to those whom he would feel ashamed to make aware of his position. He was now extremely distressed for money. His second quarter's portion was due, but no order had been received by the bankers for its payment. The receipt had been no less duly forwarded to Mrs. Myddleton. He was obliged then to have recourse to a former friend of his father's, to pay the rent . of the humble lodging in the metropolis where he had established himself, and for which his landlord became clamorous. The required sum was generously furnished; but the lender, by no means rich himself, and with a daughter to support, besides having certain appearances to keep up for his rank in life, it was incumbent on Villiers to reimburse by the day promised. This, had the annuity been paid within a reasonable time, he had been easily able to do; but the day appointed with his friend came, and no funds made their appearance from Mrs. Myddleton. One only means then remained of raising money for this purpose.

Of those who, with all the heart to relieve distress, know adversity only by name; who, never having been in want, are sated with the pleasures of the world; who, borne upon the luxury of springs to some spectacle or party, whence the palled appetite will derive but slight satisfaction,-of these shall I ask for sympathy?-If, as we know, it is often vain to demand such of the enriched and now no longer suffering man, whose heart is shut up in unkindness, small would be the sense, infinite the vanity of requiring it at the hands of the former class. Sympathy they cannot know-pity they may. Yet, little are they aware of the misery which enthrals too great a portion of the busy crowd they see hurrying along by night in the obscurer parts of London; where the needy

wretch, slinking by in shame, and with a remnant of the feeling in which remembrance of higher happier days has how large a part, turns from the glare that may betray some well-known features, and passes that loadstone of the miserable, a pawnbroker's shop, which he would fain enter—the prelude to, or accompaniment of, yet lower abasement; or the hundreds who, steeled to all sense of shame, enter without remorse.

Amongst the former of these children of want moved Villiers. With a beating heart he turned back, after passing it once or twice, and, summoning resolution, at length opened the door of a celebrated pawnbroker's in Oxford Road, as it was then called. He looked around the shop as he entered, hardly relieved as it was from obscurity by the dull-burning brass lamp that hung suspended over the counter, to assure himself that amongst the two or three casual wretches who for the moment occupied the space in front, there might be none who would

recognize him. "Needless precaution, or needless fear!" thought he; "all are in similar circumstances with myself,—poverty has marked them with her curse."

There was, however, a man whose back turned towards Villiers, and his face kept studiously away from the light, gave him the appearance of one who was equally ashamed with himself of the transaction in which he was engaged. He had, in fact, more reason, though fear of detection, and not shame, incited him to concealment. But the dealer, less scrupulous at that day than the present, of receiving, to say the least, doubtfully-acquired goods, was now at his desk, counting out the price of knavery.

Villiers took from his bosom the precious, and now all the remaining relic of a mother's love, her own picture, and offered it to the broker's consideration. The old Peer's signature, forgotten by Charles, still appeared written on the paper that enclosed it. To this the shopman called his attention. "There is," said he, "some

writing on the cover, which you might not wish to be lost. 'For Charles Villiers,—Beaulieu, Burnel Royal,' with a date."

Charles eagerly demanded it, his face glowing with shame at the disclosure; the whole circumstance being about as likely to make any impression on the feelings, or indeed the memory, of the man, as a funeral in some populous parish of London upon those of the customary attendant officials.

At the name of Burnel, or Villiers, the person whose back had hitherto been turned, now suddenly faced round, and examined Charles with a scrutiny by no means pleasing to the latter, and returned by him with a dark frown, which had not, however, the effect of repelling the other's glance. This was one more of curiosity than impertinence; but Villiers drew off into the deeper gloom, and waited till the pawnbroker should ascertain how small a sum he might offer him.

As to the dirty stranger, there was little about

him remarkable, except an apparent attempt at finery, which bestowed that especial look we may suppose peculiar to a second-rate highwayman of the year 1739. A slightly-foreign accent hung upon his tongue, as he spoke the very few words that Villiers heard him utter.

"These are not real diamonds;" said the pawnbroker at length, addressing Charles, and examining closely the brilliants in which the miniature was set.

"That is not true," replied Villiers, firmly.

"Pardon me, I only meant to ask the question," observed the wily dealer, in rather a subdued tone; but still seeming to doubt, and trying the jewels by several tests.

"If you are not satisfied that they are real diamonds, and of great value," said Villiers, "give me back the picture; I will try to get something near its worth from a jeweller."

But the pawnbroker too well knew his interest to allow the miniature to leave his shop; and sure also did he make, that from the appearance of his still gentlemanly looking customer, it was not likely to be redeemed before the time would arrive when he might legally expose it for sale. He offered, therefore, a price very far below its value, even as a pledge; yet one that he hoped would at the same time preclude all chance of the pledger's ability to reclaim it.

Villiers closed with the bargain.

"And now," said he, walking hurriedly along on his return home,—"and now I am degraded to the lowest pitch. I cannot now do more to disgrace me, short of absolute crime: I have pawned—hateful and revolting term;—I have pawned my mother's picture,—left it in a haunt of abomination, where not only she, when alive, but at that time, also, her son would have shuddered at the thoughts of entering. I should have coined my heart's blood rather than perpetrated so base a transaction! Yet, short of this, where was the alternative?—misery and dishonour—or worse—a prison."

His mind rushed back to the dreadful thoughts

he had once held as to this "last earthly ill," as he believed it; and he reflected how infinitely more wretched he had since become,—and still, still he clung to life.

After satisfying the clamours of his landlord on the following morning, and paying a small part of several outstanding debts, he repaired to the house of his father's former friend. This was a military officer of rank, commanding, at the time, his Majesty's first troop of Horse Guards*, and whom the reader perhaps has already anticipated to be Colonel Thornhill. The obligation satisfactorily acquitted, Villiers was about to take his leave, when the soldier detained him by the arm.

"Openly and fairly," said he, "what have you to rely on for your future subsistence?"

Charles could refuse so true a friend no explanation of his circumstances; and although it cost him some sacrifice of pride to confess that he was

^{*} Though commonly styled Life Guards, these troops were not officially so designated till 1788.

dependent on the caprice of such a woman as Mrs. Myddleton, he now concealed nothing from the Colonel, who, stopping suddenly, as he strode, booted and spurred, across the room, exclaimed, "Try her with a red coat!—try her with a red coat!"

Charles smiled and shook his head.

"Fifty pounds a-year!—it is little," said Thornhill, after a pause—"very little, at the present day, when there is so much change of dress and foppery; but I did with less after once starting. And you yourself, young man, have had, I think, a salutary lesson about expense lately. The same as your father—the very same," concluded he, regarding Villiers with a close scrutiny.

"But," said the latter, "I have no predilec-

"I'll be bound you have not," interrupted the Colonel. "Predilection for such an old harridan!"

[&]quot; You mistake me, sir."

"No, no—I do not. It was your appearance I spoke of, and its effect on her. Oh, take my word for it, the old woman will not be able to withstand a red coat!"

She is not so old—but you forget she is my aunt," said Villiers, with a smile; "and it was of the army that I spoke, when I mentioned the word predilection."

"I know it, I know it, boy," replied the Colonel, in his usual impatient manner. "Every young man must have a predilection for the army."

Charles made a gesture expressive of impatience on his own part at being thus misconceived.

"Aye, aye, Master Villiers," said Thornhill;
"with me at your elbow, you may do very well.

Trust to my doing the thing for you: I believe
I stand pretty high at head-quarters, and at
other quarters also—but that it does not become
me to speak of. Come, come, do not allow a
little reverse to cast you down. Who knows

but there may be a trump in the pack for you yet?"

Villiers returned to his abode, smiling as he thought of the Colonel's military enthusiasm, which would not permit him to imagine that a commission had any thing to be preferred to its obtainment in the whole world; and he, as decidedly as ever, resolved not to accept one, should his friend succeed in procuring it. As he entered the lodging, a letter from Mrs. Myddleton was put into his hand, telling him that the banker had orders to pay his quarter's portion of the annuity.

So little of interest attached to any of his proceedings till the commencement of what is called the season, the two years that must be taken into account as having already rolled on, that we may pass lightly over the intervening space, and introduce Villiers once more as a partaker in the gaieties of London, if gaieties they could have indeed appeared to him—an impoverished, yet proud and disdainful, man as he had become,

and somewhat soured in disposition by the cloud that had so early darkened his prospects in life. He was in truth but ill calculated for entering into the dissipation of a London spring, or indulging in expensive pursuits; yet there were some that cost him but dress and chair-hire, and, to derive the advantages resulting from these, namely, an occasional meeting with Viola Myddleton, he had, it may here be said, taken care that the acquaintance of such of his town friends as were likely to see her at their houses had been assiduously kept up; although, on retiring from a party, he had shrunk gloomily back to the hovel of a lodging which he would have been put to the utmost shame had he believed the peeress of the night but imagined the picture of. The heir of Lord Beaulieu and poor Mr. Villiers were, however, the very two most different people in the world; and although his person and accomplished manners prevented his ever becoming an insignificant member of society, he was nevertheless now unthought of

when absent, and uncreative of any great sensation present.

Let us except one house from the mass of these, Lord Wilmington's, a neighbour of the old Baron when he lived, and now of the Myddleton's, being within a few miles of Burnel Royal. With the prospect of his grandfather's property, and the hopes of representing the county at some future time, Villiers had not been undistinguished by the Earl; and his own heart responded with all the ardour of youthful ambition to this flattering notice in the future minister. But, how had he fallen !- hear it not, ladies, whose perfect banquets and whose brilliant evenings shake the world; whose approbation or dissent give ton to peers, or dash the hoped-for coronal down, to be uplifted with approving smiles of beauty by some more happy commoner,-hear it not. Villiers, the early aspirant for senatorial fame, had fallen from such high imaginings to the trembling desire for an invitation to a ball,-from the courted society of the mansion's lord to that of his countess,—from the anticipation of a maiden speech to the now not less ardently wished-for tête-à-tête with a lady! The great passion must verily have been at work within. Let us hope, also, that no thought of Viola's expected fortune had weight with Villiers in any project that he may have formed: if such has chanced to find a place, we must cry shame on the men of a century ago. But we will hope better things from our hero.

It may be remembered, that Lord Beaulieu mentioned a Mr. Ludlow, as being tutor to Villiers at Cambridge. He devoted a part of each spring to looking about him, as he pleased to term a six weeks' sojourn in London, for the purpose of seeing what was going on in the world, as well as keeping up his acquaintance. He was in truth an eccentric being; and, although the present incumbent of Stonyland cum Bogmoor, to which living he was inducted, upon the refusal of Villiers to commence climbing the

ladder towards a bishoprick, he was now passing rich by an unexpected legacy, and stalked gauntly about in a coloured coat, bearing as little of the priest in his outward appearance as any of the fox-hunting laymen of his county. This, however, in London; for, save in the field, his attire, when within the precincts of his parish, was in keeping with the usages of his office. Burly, and blunt, and miserly, yet occasionally performing the most charitable and generous actions-talented in a high degree, yet never applying his gifts to any useful purpose-he was such an extraordinary compound of sense and absurdity, that his neighbours did not, amongst themselves, scruple to term him deranged; while dislike of his manners, joined to fear of his temper and great personal strength, caused them to avoid his presence as a plague. Nor, when it is known that his establishment consisted but of two servants, a man and his wife, who were duly locked up every night, and not released till the next morning, when he also let

out some twenty dogs, goats, apes, and other brutes; that he had, notwithstanding this small retinue of domestics, a hunting establishment, a large farm-yard, containing about eighty waggons and ploughs, but no farm to till; a dressing-room, stored with the same number of wigs, which he never wore; eighty walking-sticks, except one favourite, never used; and two hundred pairs of boots; besides a loft containing a century of pickaxes*, and a thousand useless pieces of lumber, bought at auctions as bargains, and comprehended by the term odds and ends;when these, with numerous other peculiarities, are taken into consideration, it will not be wondered at if other society than that of the Rector of Stoneyland cum Bogmoor was sought by the gentry of the surrounding circle, believing as they did that certain mental aberrations must have induced so eccentric a turn.

He was now verging to his climacteric; and

^{*} The name, but not the character, of this eccentric man is fictitious.

although we constantly hear of such strange mortals finding some devoted helpmate to worry and perplex, yet Ludlow had never married. In default of a companion of the softer sex, he had devoted his society, or at least as much of it as could be tolerated, to a former pupil, Lord Belasyse, a man as famous for the excellence of his table, as Ludlow for the abstemious manner of life he had long adopted, and giving his cook higher wages than the whole cost of his former tutor's establishment Not often, however, was Ludlow seen at the table of this noble lord; it was between meals, or as an entertaining lecturer at his late breakfast, when the priest supplied, and well, the place of a morning paper. Yet, let it not be thought that Belasyse, jocund as he was, ever heard from the lips of Ludlow aught, save manly though wild, correct though humorous, discourse; it was energetic and peculiar, and, while blunt and unceremonious, witty, and usually instructive. Unwearied in his devotions at the shrine of luxury, Lord Belasyse formed an amusing contrast to his sparing and somewhat ascetic companion of the time; and with both of these men Villiers was now a good deal thrown together, relieving himself when stunned with the *brusquerie* of the one by seeking the lighter laugh and more refined society of the other, turning, as the conversation of this latter nevertheless might, usually upon the pleasures of the table.

There was Paston, also, a man of immense reputed fortune, who might occasionally be found at the house of Belasyse, an exhausted rake, palled with the pleasures of the world, or rather disappointed at failing to realize those which he expected in their possession. Heaps of money, squandered upon vain gratifications, afforded him not the unknown yet hoped-for bliss he meditated in their expenditure; and the world, ransacked for other enjoyments, which proved as vain when they were grasped, contained now perhaps but one that he believed might be obtained for money which had not yet been essayed;

VILLIERS.

this was the retired life of a married man. But too lively a doubt of the happiness such is said to confer, had ever existed in his mind to permit this important step to be taken; and he had met with disappointment in so many others, that it was said he would never summon sufficient resolution for the trial. Not quite thirty, he might yet be accounted to have lived twice as long; and now disgusted with the world, after having abused its best gifts, he looked upon all it contained with indifference: yet he was talented, and had been accomplished; and, when able to throw off the cloak of conceit or apathy that hid these qualities, sufficiently agreeable in society. and indeeding another brings are not a supplying the

men and midd to his popular or are place and some or drawn of his a productive pre-violation between the beautiful production of the same do not higher herealth and realization and equality beginning and by the health design product of beautiful beginning and by the health design product of beautiful to produce the size health design product of beautiful to produce the size health design product of beautiful to produce the size health design product of beautiful to produce the size health design produce and beautiful to produce the size health design produce and beautiful to produce the size health design produce and beautiful to produce the size health design produce and beautiful to produce the size health design produce and beautiful to produce the size health design produce and beautiful to produce the size health design produce the size the size

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CHAPTER IX.

Here vanity, a blooming maid, Flaunted in Brussels and brocade; Fantastic, frolicsome, and wild, With all the trinkets of a child : And wealth that played a knavish part, And taught the tongue to wrong the heart; Observed that love was ever blind, And talked at random of the mind; That killing eyes, and bleeding hearts, And all the artillery of darts, Were long ago exploded fancies, And laughed at, even in romances.

COTTON.

WHETHER any change of ministry affected the Myddletons in their choice of a residence it is unimportant here to question. However, the house of Lord T- was not purchased; and, as the lady suggested, the "New place, Grosvenor Square," was decided upon; which, as Belgrave was about to do some few years since,

soon collected wealth and nobility within its focus. Every one is sent into Grosvenor Square; but here in fact our family took up their abode. Viola's health had been, during the previous year, somewhat delicate, which had, upon the advice of medical men, prevented them from leaving the country. The present spring, however, was amply to compensate for their absence from London; and indeed change of scene was supposed necessary to raise the young lady's spirits; for these had of late become rather of a pensive cast.

However cooling the effect of absence from an object that has once excited in us a strong degree of interest, passion, if it has ever taken root, known or unknown to the possessor of that heart in whose fertile soil love may grow, will as surely spring up as the sapling oak from the fallen accorns which the wild boar of the forest has left untouched, when the revolutions of time and chance shall bring together those by whom this feeling has been experienced; and however dis-

cretion, propriety, and rectitude, the watchful care of friends, or the commendable exertions of ourselves, may prevent us from taking that line of conduct which we know to be ineligible, or circumstances make even vain to attempt, still, while there remains a heart it will have an object, not the less desired that it is secret. Perhaps we may wish that this were not so: we were then saved, in truth, much mental pain; but it is uncertain that the generality of the human race would consent to lose this quality, and with it all the hopes, how ever baseless, all the pleasurable remembrances or anticipations of communion, that light up a dreary path with the dreams of imagination.

It was, then, not unnatural that Viola should, on coming to town, ardently desire to meet Villiers; nor that, on his part, he should, as we have shewn that he purposed, seek a renewal of their intercourse. No sooner had the Myddletons established themselves, than Charles paid his respects; and although coldly and indifferently

received at first, his aunt must, he knew, deny him the house, at the risk of her popularity with those whom it was her interest to propitiate, and whom also Charles had enlisted on his side certain peeresses, whose titles will nevertheless, in all probability, remain uncited throughout our history; save one, the grace, the ornament, the rallying-point of her set, Lady Wilmington.

Villiers, although every where received with pleasure, and esteemed virtually as agreeable as before his fall, could not disguise from himself the truth of his being now looked down on by many who were formerly fond of his society. These he felt he could—the men at least—have trodden under foot with infinite delight, would they but have shewn themselves sufficiently accommodating to resolve their various necks into one. As to the jealousy created by the place he held in the favour of Viola, he looked on it with a proud feeling of self-gratulation, and enjoyed the flutter of the many moths who

hovered round, and burnt their wings before they died.

Kensington Gardens and St. James's Park were at this time places of great pedestrian resort, and we may perchance indulge our readers with a promenade on the Mall after dinner, if indulgence it can indeed be called.

The Mall was, at the time of which we treat, a place of much mode. In our day, except at a bal costumé, we should in vain look for a similarly brilliant assemblage of gorgeously dressed people,

"The glittering train whom lace and velvet bless," which then graced this noted walk. Yet, shall we regret the change? Shall we not rather much rejoice that the monstrous and grotesque, though often splendid, dress, such as was then worn, has long since ceased to inflict its cumbrous weight upon us? Let us not, either, lament that our tranquillity is unbroken by the promenade which followed the early meal, a

penalty that should be reserved alone for the wicked. Conceive, if you can, the fearful sufferings of aggrieved nature, exuberant with the plenishing of Lord Belasyse's table, or that of any other modern Lucullus who may be present to the imagination,-picture to yourself a portly man, having curiously inquired into the composition of three courses, and dived to the penetralia of numberless bins, from whence never issued an imperfect bottle of that delicious fluid, rosy or amber, sparkling or still, which of old changed men to gods, but now, alas, possessing a contrary charm in the scale of created life, as often turning them to-no more! But see him, graceless from the ample repast, all buckram and formality, buckles and lace,-a coat the weight of a funeral pall,-velvet ponderous and stiff with broidered work of many a maiden's weary finger, in short, a full court-dress, including a wig reaching to the shoulders, a hat under the arm, a sword, the enemy of our fair companions, shoes up to the ankles, with heels of prodigious altitude,

and stockings rolled high above the knee, or but met half way down by that short garment which is, in the present day, said to decorate the nether man. Can he be gay and dégagé, or light and pleasing to his fair companions, who, themselves feeding chameleon-like on atmosphere, have drawn him ruthlessly from table, to dance attendance by their side; but habit is second nature—the armed man of former days could lightly vault from the plain all mail-clad as he was, and "grow into his seat," upon the capering courser, who again felt him feather weight—from habit, also, we must think.

Receive our gratulations, too, fair and noble ladies, upon the disappearance of unsightly hoops, the flaunty robe of stiff brocade, sweeping for yards in train behind, excess of satin, lace, flounces, furbelows, and fardingales, with all the various discomforts thought indispensable a century ago. But, oh! keep us, at all hazards, from an after-dinner walk! The phaeton—the saddled steed,—the ready barge upon the still

wave, and the return by moonlight, soothed with soft music, timely diapasoned to the euphony of dipping oars—these, these only!—Or, stay, a lounge of dreamy castle-building, recumbent on the dry voluptuous turf, near ancient hall, with groups of lofty trees to catch the wayward vision, or, it may be, those companions whom we love, not boisterous with ill-advised mirth, but reading musically from the page of winning lore—such are the only out-door relaxations after summer banquet.

But still we must return to the austerity of a dress promenade,—return even two pages, and call it an indulgence.

There had been a dinner party at the Wilmingtons, nearly next-door neighbours of the Myddletons, in Grosveuor Square—neighbours, also, in the country. These our rich and rustic new arrivals found a great acquisition, after being so long a time separated from the gay and the great world. The mansion of the Countess was attractive of all that might be styled the world,

par excellence,—all that could make society agreeable. Not that amongst the latter did his great aunt class Charles Villiers; but to prevent communication between him and Viola she could not, how earnestly soever such a measure might be tried. In what place were the Myddletons, there also, as if by enchantment, or the effect of fortuitous circumstances, there also was their relation—always this provoking Mr. Charles. He hung upon the traces of his aunt like an incubus, and often was she fain to take a hand at quadrille, purely for distraction's sake, preferring even to leave her daughter as his prey, rather than keep his hateful person in her sight without such sacrifice.

Possessing, as Mr. Myddleton did, extensive property in his county, it was not likely that he would be disregarded; nor was his wife one of those who easily give up their claim to that place which birth has assigned them as their right. As to Viola, few could be indifferent to her who possessed so much sweetness of disposition,

beauty, and expectations. Lady Wilmington had no family of her own to bring out; she was not, therefore, unwilling to have her young friend much about her. Viola, then, was nearly as much at the house of the Countess as at that of her mother; neither is it less true that Villiers found occasion to visit there much oftener than at his relations.

The dinner party, having concluded their early duties to the table, had removed to St. James's Park. Separating into small groups, they met their various friends, walked with them, then joined another knot—met, repassed—group after group, mingling, lounging, or resting upon the benches, till, as the evening closed in, scarcely any two were to be found in company as they had arrived, except the younger ladies and their chaperons.

Mrs. Myddleton, being indisposed, had for a day or two seen no company but Dr. Meade, the King's physician; and Viola was now under the care of Lady Wilmington. Villiers and Mr. Paston came together.

"How can we," said the latter, addressing his companion, as they descended from the carriage, "how can we allow ourselves to be dragged to such a haunt of apish absurdity?"

Villiers answered not at first, for his mind was fixed upon an object that, amidst the gay crowd, still rivetted all his attention—it was, of course, Viola; but the changing scene closed upon and shut her from his view. He then turned towards Paston.

"Some enjoyment there may be to derive from it," said he, smiling, "though 'Cassius is aweary of the world.'"

"Enjoyment!" returned Paston: "I have not many more years than you; but I would give all I possess to have the appetite for society which you seem to preserve."

Villiers shook his head mournfully.

"You are ignorant," said he, "of what I have

undergone, and in my solitary hours still feel, or you would say I was not to be envied by the veriest wretch; nor would you wonder that I sought society for distraction."

"Society!" said Paston, with contempt, as they moved towards the splendid crowd. "It has few charms for me. Its pains very far outweigh its privileges."

"Nay, we must not feel it a duty performed, or the charm flies; but a pleasure sought and entered upon with avidity," said Villiers.

"It no longer constitutes a pleasure for me, I repeat," said Paston. "There is still wanting some charitable gift that Nature does not, I fear, possess—something to fill the gloomy void which reigns in the mind when it has no earthly thing to hope or fear."

"As to the latter," said Villiers, "if it may be so styled, I certainly have that advantage, inasmuch as there happens often to be about me the wholesome apprehension of four stone walls."

"Psha! you interrupt me with your common-

places; that we may all fear, perhaps," returned Paston; "but why not get into Parliament? With the Myddleton's money and the Wilmington's influence you would find no difficulty. As for me I have no ambition; nor, I perceive, have you: but if you regard personal safety—"

"The very wish of my heart!" cried Villiers, eagerly: "not for the safety of the case: I have higher views."

" Doubtless !" said Paston, with contempt.

"But," continued Villiers, "though the picture you have drawn of my interest and access to money is a very beautiful one, albeit achieved with one stroke of the pencil, it is but a picture. Would, indeed, it were real!" concluded he, with some bitterness of recollection.

"Villiers, I have had all that may be bought for money," said Paston, in his rambling way, "yet find that all, vanity and vexation of spirit."

"You are a second Solomon!" observed Villiers; a remark that by no means pleased his companion. "But there are some which may not be bought—fame—reputation—glory."

"Why not try them yourself? The road lies open to a man of such discernment and perseverance," said Paston, with a sneer. "Why do you, in the prime of life, and, as you confess, without a shilling—"

"I made no such confession," interrupted the other, with a rising blush.

"Well, well: why should a youth like you, thrown upon your own resources for bread, waste and neglect the creeping hours of time, instead of trying the army, and pruning, or, if you like it better, reaping a way to glory with your sword?"

"All mighty fine, I have no doubt," said Villiers: "you have, however, just told me that I had no ambition, and you were right if you meant that this way it lay."

"Ha! you would make an apt senator," said Paston, contemptuously.

Villiers thought of the high hopes he had

once formed, and was silent. He then reflected how unequally this world's goods are distributed: his own deserts, (and he imagined they were many,) unrewarded by the hand of fortune, while here was a man sated to loathing with excess of earthly gratification. But, in truth, Paston was a subject for the speculations of philosophy; his every sense had found desire anticipated, and real enjoyment defeated by meditated schemes and contrivances of delight; no interval, no obstacle interposed between the wish and the accomplishment: with him, indeed, might society, cold, false, and heartless as himself-and such he had found it,-be denied a single pleasing attribute; and still the crowd who gazed upon the worn and used being, regarded him even with envy!

After a few turns Paston professed that the languo, stupidity, and vexation were unbearable—he could, he said, almost find it in his heart to weep,—for what, he knew not; and, nervous and listless, he threw himself upon a bench

somewhat retired from the crowd, while Villiers leaned upon its back and gazed intently at the moving pageant, gay and many-coloured, as the concentrated yet still evolving rays of a kaleidoscope.

"What seekest thou there?" said a deep voice from behind, as the speaker clapped him on the back, a little too roughly for the occasion. "What seekest, boy,—a wife amidst the horde? Aye, aye, take unto thyself a wife," continued Ludlow, for it was him, "Take—"

"I shall take unto myself a coach," said Paston, rising with affected consternation at the strange figure of the clergyman. "It will come back for you, Villiers; but, trust me, I have not nerves for your friend—who upon earth is he?" This in a lower voice, but not inaudible, though unanswered by Ludlow, who regarded him with a look of the most ineffable contempt. Putting his arm into that of Villiers, as the other withdrew, he entreated him to join the throng, an indulgence that every man would

certainly not have accorded; but Villiers complied.

"What," said the priest, ironically, "so you must marry too! Marry and have heirs,—yet what said the old Lord?"

"The reverse of what he did, Ludlow, if you mean as regards marriage."

"Sixty, said he not, was time enough?"

"Then you have yet a chance."

"Lo, yonder she walketh," resumed Ludlow, speaking in the phraseology of a work lately published, and much in vogue, not from the intrinsic merit it possessed, but from the odour of its patronage, proceeding from the Mæcenas of the age to whom it was dedicated, else had it not acquired, perhaps, so great a reputation—"Lo, yonder she walketh, innocence in her mind, and modesty on her cheek."

Villiers turned towards him, and laughed aloud.

"Of whom do you speak?" said he; "for, though I will not say there are few here to whom that term would apply, there are, it is to be feared, too many who cannot claim the praise."

"Sententious and profound! Nay, here she comes. You are right to have a care."

"You are on a wrong scent," said Villiers;
"but I am not going to make you my father
confessor; for, do you know one thing, friend—
a secret worth the telling is better worth the
keeping."

"Musty proverbs are like mouldy cheese," said Ludlow, "laid by so long that few will care to make use thereof."

"Thank you for your savoury comparison: you practise not, however, what you preach."

"One thing I have practised, young man, and which I have, ere now, preached to you—celibacy. Love?—Stuff!—Again: what did the old Lord say? 'Come, rouse thyself and be a man, and shake the weak wanton Cupid off'—

' Like dew-drops from the lion's mane.'

Fix not, at least, too suddenly-'The wise man

doubteth often and changeth his mind." Not that I would have you do this."

"Thank you again!"

"Except where the choice of a wife is concerned. I only recommend it here, because it is the very way never to get married."

"Suppose my wife have money—suppose she have wit, beauty, worth,—"

"Pooh, pooh: if you had stopped at money there were enough to justify the step in the eyes of all your tribe."

" My tribe ?"

"Yes, the tribe of youth and folly; but come, I will not be too severe. I have marked your progress of late, and know right well the track you are laid on. Marriage is not worse, nay not so miserable as poverty. You have tried one, now try the other."

"Then you have changed your mind."

"Is not the subject a wife," cried Ludlow, exultingly, as he prodded Villiers in the ribs with his fore finger. "But," continued he, "in sober sadness, strike while the iron is hot—faint heart never won fair lady."

"Away with your proverbs," said his young friend. "Your discourse is made up of paradoxes—nay, you are one huge paradox yourself!"

"I know not that I am one," said Ludlow;
"but I love a paradox from my heart. It is
the life of conversation, and the soul of society.
Tell the wretched being who has just left us,
that his head is not upon his shoulders, and he
would have too little energy to confute such a
position, or"—

"A paradox, indeed, to him!—But you mistake the man: there is a fire within—a spark that, if you had struck as hard upon his shoulder with your steely hand as you did on mine, would have shown the flinty property of this seemingly nerveless creature; but tell Belasyse that dinner was a useless ceremony, just for argument's sake, would he reply to your attack? Yes, but with other weapons than the tongue—your posi-

tion would be instantly confuted by practice instead of logic. Example in starving, he would say, were no proof, although facts are stubborn things; and entering at once upon the commencement of two or three courses, he would prove, beyond the possibility of a defeat, that dining was a necessary good."

- "My postulate would still remain untouched."
- " So would not his dinner."
- "Come, young man—flippancy is a bad resort from argument."
- "Oh, hang the argumentum ad hominem! See, who comes this way?"
- "A constellation of bright stars, you would, I suppose, style the lady and her apes."
- "A paradox, rather, Ludlow! Venus, with the satellites of Jupiter."
 - " Has she not legitimately
 - Her own bright circlet?"

said the priest. "Good genii guard her from the lost pleiad's fate!"

"The lovely Darwin!" exclaimed Villiers,

with enthusiasm. Now forbid it, patroness of damsels, that this 'bright particular star' should ever fall from her high place!"

And as he spoke, the lady in question advanced, chaperoned by a mute dame, and attended by a brilliant train, dazzling with her wit and beauty, charming with the soft and musical tones of her voice, carried beyond herself with spirits, powerful to please, and, knowing of her power, holding despotic sway over a host of hearts.

She stopped to the salute of Villiers. A short yet lively series of iteration and rejoinder ensued between them, and the pageant passed.

- "Splendid creature!" exclaimed Villiers.—
- " Lovely-charming-perfect!"
 - " Not perfect."
 - " As wanting the golden charm?"
- "Not so-that I care not of-she has, I should say, a charm too many."
 - " Your charm?"
 - " She laughs too much."

"Yes, poverty and a rake would cure her of that; but she talks too loud."

"Believe me, I would; she should be dumb " You would outnoise her." in my presence." a solution que la se me la sup a

" Doubtless. What more?" "She is enamoured of her own loveliness, not of yours, though she were to tell you so; her time is taken up with toys and gauds-lost in dress and adornments."

"Nay, she is simplicity itself." " Her foot abides not in her father's house."

" Parent she has none.—What more?" "Take heed, young man,—aye, though her

beauty were as the sun in the firmament of

heaven, turn away from her charms, and suffer not your soul to be ensnared by the allurements

"But," said Villiers, "you give yourself a vain uneasiness; my love points not towards of imagination." her; yet suppose I find sensibility of heart," continued he, in the same strain as Ludlow; "softness of manners, an accomplished mind, and a form agreeable to my fancy."

"Take her home to thine house, -that is to say, if she will go," said Ludlow, changing his tone,-" for if she is of my mind, she would prefer staying in her own. But, adieu-I see where your love does point. We shall meet to-morrow." And the clergyman posted off, none knew whither; it might be to the house of Belasyse,-it might be to attend a low debating society incognito, to discuss the abominations of the Excise bill. In this way he often delighted to pass his evenings; and amongst the noisy declamants he usually took the lead. His young friend was glad of his departure, more especially as he perceived advancing Lady Wilmington and her party, one of which Ludlow had, with his quick glance, already detected as being the cynosure of Villiers's eyes.

The Countess bid our hero to remember that this was one of her evenings, and in no wise to

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neglect presenting himself in Grosvenor Square. Her parties were indeed too agreeable to be lightly foregone, even were Viola not an assistant there. Politics at her house lapsed nearly into oblivion, save in one especial room, unsought, we may believe, by the young and gay. Here Whig and Tory met on friendly terms; while woman reigned, wit sparkled, and concord, ease, and freedom-all combined to offer their choicest gifts at this court of pleasure. So said her ladyship's encouraged print; if 'twere not truly or wholly so, no exertion on the Countess's part was left untried to give such fame the stamp of

As Ludlow had not been unobserved of the party his former pupil now joined, Lady Wiltruth. mington, amused with his extraordinary appearance, bore rather hard upon the young beau, and proceeded perhaps further than she found was agreeable to his feelings. To atone for this, she desired Villiers to bring him to her house that night—a request with which he readily complied, perfectly certain that it would be the last thing of which the man who professed such disdain not only for assemblies, but their fairest ornaments, would think of availing himself. ture and reguest, its sich releasing and and security of positions and circumstance would be quire a master peerly. I shall therefore (a)ach has lightly on the mielligent conversation which

CHAPTER X. If Indesignabile to town and merely bringing me the fore-

Where gay ideas crowd the heated brain; While peers and dukes, and all the sweeping train, And garters, stars, and coronets appear, And in soft sounds "your grace" salutes the ear. Pope.

MATTER of fact, as this tale has been entitled in the last chapter, we must still take the reader with us to Lady Wilmington's; though indeed we may not, dare not, attempt a correct portraiture of this evening, with all its characters brought out upon the canvas; its various excellencies, and for what is perfect, its follies and its faults. Of the last there were, nevertheless, fewer at her ladyship's than at any other house in town, which may still be deemed a very negative praise; but to give the whole its due force and vigour, its rich colouring, and apt seizure of position and circumstance, would require a master pencil. I shall therefore touch but lightly on the intelligent conversation which distinguished it, leaving this mostly in the politics' room, and merely bringing into the foreground those people we are already acquainted with.

Enter, then, the drawing-rooms of the Countess, rich in the gilding and ornament suiting with a taste, by the glorious frivolity of Louis XIV., formed and left; and which, though scotched, was as yet by no means killed for many years afterwards: even now, see it resuscitate in a club of note. But enter with us these gorgeous rooms, whose rose-coloured hangings fling back the blush to beauty's cheek, and see the central fascination in the lovely hostess herself. Look on each side, where the gentle plumy wavelet curls in its pride—not in full sea: behold the shore, as it were, spread with orient pearl and precious stone, the rich bro-

cade, the velvet robe, and all that ocean tide of silk crested with lace,—where England's fairest shed around their smiles,—where the finely-rounded arm and taper fingers, the snowy neck, and rosy lips, and clustering glossy curls, cause poets tune the lay—each bearer a Belinda.

"Such :- and to bear them company, a lordly train."

Yet we have little to do with any, save those in the near vicinity of Lady Wilmington, one of whom was Villiers.

"Mr. Ludlow," said he, in answer to a question of that fair dame, "I have not seen since we parted; and it would by this time puzzle a conjuror, or take a posse of constables, with all their ingenuity, which is not much, save the mark! to find out his retreat. He scarcely whispers to himself the route he intends to take. Why all this mystery I know not; but he fears

'Lest the very stones prate of his whereabout!'

mentary to the Wilmingtons,—likewise who, in a fit of sentiment or avarice, had married Fanny Dyer, the pretty daughter of the farmer of Southcote Mills. With all her primitive simplicity, however, she, in homely phrase, had by far the worst of the bargain.

Villiers looked round surprised, but resumed:

"I have sent a note to his domicile, in respect
of your ladyship's invitation. For the rest, I am
sure that he will display the very worst of tastes
if he does not fly upon the moment to avail himself of the honour vouchsafed,—that is, if he
comes home before midnight."

"I am rejoiced to think that he has not absolutely forsworn the society of our unhappy sex," said the Countess, "even if it were only for Miss Myddleton's sake."

Viola laughed at the prospect of making such a conquest.

"I think," said Villiers, "he can scarcely as yet have brought himself to contemn the attractions of the beau sexe, since he is still far from sixty; and he told me, no later than an hour ago, that this was the proper marrying age; he had a higher authority for such a rule, however, which I will not at present quote. He has, nevertheless, forsworn most other things, save and especially except old wigs, boots, pickaxes, and a numerous collection of other articles, too infinite to particularize."

" Dear !" ejaculated the astonished Hedgely."

"Your fair friend seems strangely unintellectual," said he, as the Countess returned to Viola and himself, after drawing the pretty rustic off, and leaving her to the charitable attempts of some entertaining macaroni, while her husband discussed the poor laws with the Bishop of L—.

"Where did you pick her up?"

Lady Wilmington related.

"I have two others of her clique upon my hands," continued she, "who most unreasonably will not attempt the entertainment of each other, though one never utters, and her opposite talks you to death." "I wish you would take the last upon your hands," said Viola to Villiers.

"You most uncharitable person!" exclaimed Lady Wilmington. "Nay, if he is to be killed, I think we are equal to the task ourselves; but, there, you may try your own powers; unless you fear, as I judge from your last speech, some other person may take exceptions at our keeping Mr. Villiers here so long."

And she left the happy couple to an hour's tête-à-tête, which far be it from us to interrupt.

"The world is profuse of its admiration for your cook, Lord Belasyse," said the Countess, as she approached the noble Earl,—"the artiste you have brought with you from Aix-la-Chapelle."

"I rejoice to hear that he is likely to astonish and delight; but if the man be worthy of his fame, may I hope your ladyship will pronounce sentence upon him; and with your lord, or without, if he cannot be spared from more dignified, but less, I trust, pleasing occupation, dine with me on an early day—name it yourself."

"A very praiseworthy arrangement! I fear without him I can scarcely do so."

"Bring all your train—the fair Darwin,—the accomplished though not beautiful Laura Craggenthorpe—I prohibit her mother,—the novelty, that pure but unpretending pearl of the season, Miss Myddleton,—"

"Stop, stop, my lord,"—

"She is, I know, in herself a host; but if you delight in the refinements of taste, come and judge: upon your verdict M. Girande stands or falls."

Lady Wilmington shook her head laughingly; and Paston coming up, almost interested in the idea of a possibly new dish, relieved her for the time, by asking what was the forte of this celebrated man.

" His forte is an olive."

"Psha!-is that all?"

"By no means all, my good sir; you are ever so late for dinner, that you lose half the good things. Believe me, in cookery, time must be taken by the forelock. He and Amadée Girande wait for no man."

"I should think an olive not so difficult to dress," said Lady Wilmington; "but I must get his receipt."

"I doubt whether he will give it you," said Belasyse; "though he is not an ungallant man, naturally. I am certain he would refuse it to me! But let me send for him, and he shall give it your ladyship verbatim,

"Your cook in my drawing-rooms," said the Countess, laughing, "with his cap and apron? That would be too good!"

"By no means cap and apron! You do not know the man, who would be shocked to think that you figured him to yourself in such a dress. I will send for the gentleman himself."

And he despatched his carriage for Monsieur Girande. In the mean time there was music going forward in another room, but no dancing was known at Lady Wilmington's—refreshments elsewhere—while the company, disposing themselves as they pleased, entertained each other with lively conversation, garnished with an occasional epigram, a well turned compliment, or perhaps a slight infusion of scandal to make it piquante. Love was talked by some, horses by others, poetry, plays, novels, dress, royalty, mobs, which were not unusual—wars, preliminaries of peace, and Pretenders,—there were some to hands,—but no deeper dip into politics.

Lady Wilmington was with the two ladies of killing propensity, each in the opposite, till, having procured a listener for one, and a talker for the other, she moved again towards the place where Belasyse had taken up his position, just as they announced the return of his carriage from the opera with the cook, whose arrival was instantly noised abroad through the apartments of the Countess, Mrs. Hedgely not failing to find herself by the side of the noble hostess;

and well might the unsophisticated—I think that is the word—yes, unsophisticated being open her blue eyes upon the culinary beaux, the first of cooks and dandies, attired in an infinitely finer dress than any person in the room, even at such a period of frippery.

He entered with an air of easy impudence that was still graceful, and advancing to Lord Belasyse, was by him directed to the Countess, when, making three consecutive bows, and bringing his feet together, he awaited her ladyship's commands with a slight inclination of the body towards her, but little more than a Peer would affect to a lady of rank.

Lady Wilmington, half angry, blushed deep, but rallying herself, determined to let the thing pass off with good humour; while several men around decided that the Earl and his cook were two of the most impudent men breathing.

"Girande," said the former, with a look half propitiation, half command, "Miladi prays you to give her the receipt for dressing an olive that you know of."

"Pardon, monsieur et madame," said he of the kitchen, with a smile and a bow to each. "Pardon, je ne donne jamais de recettes par écrit!"

His head then went up loftily, yet, while there was no disrespect in his manner, this was rather that of one who withholds a favour from an inferior. His eye-brows were now drawn up to the forehead, his shoulders to the ears, his elbows into the sides, and his hands poised horizontally, while he entered into an explanation of his reasons for not writing; but to a lady, he said, and so beautiful a lady, he could refuse nothing in reason, therefore he would endeavour to make her understand it by word of mouth.

"Je ne donne jamais de recettes par écrit.

Mais, madame ne me comprend pas? I will
try the English."

"Mary to wisy - the oil is a really

"Oui, oui, Girande: elle vous comprend bien, tres bien—ne vous donnez pas la peine."

"Mais, que voulez-vous, donc, que je fasse milor? What would you that I should do for madame? Je ne donne jamais de recettes par écrit. Mais, hors de celà, je suis tout à son service. Est-ce que vous voudrez donc celle là qui plut si fort à Monsieur le Duc? Ah! mon pauvre maître! He was so fond of it! Ah, my poor departed master!" Here he applied a cambric handkerchief to either eye: "I do not know what he shall do without me where he is gone!"

" Mais au regard de cette olive, Girande ?"

"Ah, de olive! Mais mon pauvre maître!
Souffrez, monsieur, que je consacre une seule
larme à sa mémoire!"

Suddenly he drew himself up, recovering, as it were, from his momentary attendrissement, and addressed himself to the task he had resolved on.

" Mais la recette-ah, ah! je me rapelle:

Tenez, miladi, je la raconterai. Ce n'est pas tout à fait d'une olive que nous parlons. Mais, madame—ou bien son artiste—ótera le noyau d'une olive, et lui substituera un filet d'anchois. Le fruit ainsi bourré sera mis dans une mauviette, laquelle entrera dans une caille, que renfermera une perdrix; et cette perdrix, cachée dans les flancs d'un faisan, le verra disparaître à son tour au sein d'une vaste dinde, dont un cochon de lait deviendra la retraite. Un feu brillant combinera les jus divers de ces viandes enchassées, et l'heure est arrivée de servir ce precieux melange.

"Arrêtez, madame! Vous y portez le couteau! Votre palais excité par les sensations delicieuses dont votre odorat s'enivre, deguste
déjà par avance les tranches heterogenes que
vous aller couper; arrêtez, miladi—et faites
promptement jeter tout par la fenêtre,—tout,
excepté l'olive, qui est devenue le centre de la
quintessence des élémens qui l'entouraient. Vous
l'avalerez cette olive, miladi, et vous ferez
prudemment d'avoir un flacon d'éther acétique

à vos côtés, car vous pourriez vous trouver mal

A murmur of applause ran round the brilliant circle at this original exhortation, wherein the manner of cooking, the method of eating, and the antidote against its possible effects, were all set forth. Lady Wilmington testified her obligations, trying the while to find some means of being rid of the professor: the men clapped; the ladies smiled their approbation. As for Mrs. Hedgely, she was so lost in astonishment, albeit, she comprehended not a single word, that, half an hour afterwards, Lord Arthur Finchley remarked she had not yet closed her mouth.

"What have you done, Lady Wilmington?" said Lord Belasyse, as his cook withdrew, the most supreme contempt in his face, the highest indignation in his air. "What can you have adventured?"

"I only offered him a present of five guineas,"

"Five guineas!—I am lost, lost irretrievably—at least I shall lose my cook. Cruel, cruel Lady Wilmington! From you, at least, I did not expect this blow. What is to be done? It will cost me fifty pounds to-morrow, and my box at the opera!"

Jameire to be worted

Groups of people—here a pair of ministers trying not to talk politics,—there a more interesting couple, their thoughts differently directed from the former, though ministering, certainly, to each other,—now two beaux attempting wit,—again two wits essaying to be beaux, and neither party succeeding; but elsewhere the compartments of the conversational chess-board were most appropriately fitted: in particular squares, truth to say, the discourse might neither have been "very wise nor witty."

Judge!-

"Go not near that corner, mamma, or you will disturb the most interesting pair of turtles that ever cooed."

This from the Lady Laura Craggenthorpe. Her mother went, of course, immediately, and procured herself to be wished at the deuce by Mr. Villiers, to say nothing of his companion; the tête-à-tête having prolonged itself to a stretch of time of which only the parties most concerned are usually unconscious.

Lady Laura had then accomplished two things much desired, viz., the riddance of her mother's society, and the annoyance of a pair of lovers who appeared happy. Her own conversation she may have had no wish to be disturbed in, though it is not to be asserted that her victim, Lord Arthur Finchley, had the same desire of a protracted discourse, tired to death as he was with questions for the last quarter of an hour, leading nowhere, or not beyond the merest trifle. She was a woman of the greatest research in small matters, never resting from her inquiry till she had dived to the very bottom of an affair. Some spice of ill nature, infinite curiosity, and a very little talent, constituted the

mass of Lady Laura's character, and we may not wonder if her society was more often conferred than desired.

Had there not been just the slightest sprinkling of Laura Craggenthorpe's, Lady Wilmington's parties would have been found perfection à nuire.

"But who is that extraordinary being in the green coat? Look, Lord Arthur, no sword, and wearing his own hair? By the bye, what a beautiful peruke is that you have on! It scarcely comes low enough on the shoulders, however."

"It is an improvement on the Ramillies,—
the sort of thing is going out, these very low
affairs."

"Look, look, Lord Arthur, Mr. Villiers is introducing him to Lord Wilmington, and now to Miss Myddleton. Who are these Myddletons?"

"Who are they: nay, people of a day—of yesterday, at least. Stay, I will tell you a good thing apropos of that. You know, or perhaps

you don't, that the King of France has given Madame de Pompadour's brother a Marquisate, the title is Vandiere; or at least he has bought it for a few thousand livres: well, so the good and witty people of Paris have named him the Marquis d'Avant-hier. Is it not good, madam?' concluded Lord Arthur to Lady Cletherington, the younger lady's mother who had just joined them.

The Countess did not, however, appreciate the joke.

"Well, Lord Arthur, have you discovered yet? Your glass has been fixed on him for a sufficient length of time," said Lady Laura. "I believe he is a member of the Antiquarian Society—or an ambassador from Khouli Khan; there is such a being in town, I know,—or a contractor for Westminster Bridge, — or perhaps one of the piers—I know not."

"Perhaps the river-god himself, -he is strangely wanting here, at least, for Lord Arthur's wit has run dry." " Excellent excellent. I will go and see who it is."

"Stay, you need not be in such haste to leave me. Ah, Sir Thomas Brittlebank, you never say a bad thing,—or an uncivil one, give me leave to tell Lord Arthur."

" Adieu, ma belle."

"Stop, Lord Arthur-I command you-"

"And shall be obeyed.—Sir Thomas, help me to punish her," said he, aside to the old knight, who had been watching for an opportunity of saying something ill-natured for the last ten minutes; and fruitful as he was of contre temps, always intended, but aptly disguised: there was not often a long space between his strokes of castigation, even when people who knew his disposition were most propiatory and forbearing towards him.

"Who are these Myddletons, did you say, Lady Cletherington?"

" Indeed I did not, Sir Thomas."

" It was I that asked," said Lady Laura.

"Faith, I might have known that, too; your ladyship's spirit of inquiry leads you to the furthest extent of every question; but the Peerage will tell you who Mrs. Myddleton is."

- " I never look at the Peerage."
 - " It is uncivil, and tells us our ages."
 - " Us, Sir Thomas?" said the Countess.
- "True—no, no, not us; indeed it does not tell your ladyship's, either, for it is an old one. Ha, ha! you know the title was—"
- "Well, well, Sir Thomas—about these Myddletons?" said the daughter.
- "Why, they were very low people—the grandfather was in trade."
- "Well, he has got a very pretty grand-daughter," said Lord Arthur.
- "Pretty?-you do not call her pretty?"
- "That emerald, Lady Cletherington," said Lord Arthur.—"Allow me—where did you get it?—the most beautiful I ever saw!"
 - " At Scryjynski's, the German Pole."
 - "German Pole!" exclaimed the knight. "Oh,

ah!-But-and your lord will soon know its value!-ha, ha!"

"Not so fortunate, I assure you—tiresome old man!—Do get him away, Lord Arthur," said her ladyship apart.

" And myself," thought he.

"Strange-looking man, i'faith!" said Lord Arthur, regarding Ludlow with a long stare, as he went off with the chuckling knight. What with Belasyse and his cook, and these Cletheringtons, the pretty Countess is losing herself most sadly. I must give her a hint. 'Gads—strange fellow, 'faith! Sir Thomas—oh, you are gone—heavens be praised! Ah! Villiers, you and the fair Viola seem to get on well together. I hope I shall soon congratulate you. Who's the salvage man you've brought here? Scarcely presentable, I think; but perhaps he's amusing."

"Judge for yourself," said Villiers.—" Ludlow, allow me to introduce you to Lord Arthur Finchley." "Beg to be excused," said the clergyman, turning his back, for he had particularly sharp ears.

"What a bear !--Really he ought to be shut up, Charles. Is he dangerous?"

"Very!" said Ludlow, in a loud voice, as he turned once more.

"Sir, you are uncivil," replied Lord Arthur.

"Very, sir, and quarrelsome;" returned the other.

"Hush!—Come away, Finchley—he is a clergyman," whispered Villiers, trying to prevent a scene. "The devil take him, why did I bring him here?"

"Why did you, indeed?" said Ludlow, overhearing his late pupil.

"Your profession, sir," said Lord Arthur, pointing to his side, where hung no sword, "and the colour of your cloth, at least what it ought to be,—"

"Shall not prevent you from receiving satisfaction, if you wish it."

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- " How, sir-do you mean-?"
 - " Not with artificial weapons."
- "Come away, Finchley—he is a second Topham, the strong man." Villiers and Bellasyse, making signs to each other, suddenly pulled their friends different ways, while people stared and wondered, and by degrees dropped off.
- "Come, a glass of wine, Ludlow?" said Belasyse, drawing him off into the refreshment-rooms.
 - " It is well iced, I'll warrant you."
- "Offer it to the young lord, then—'twill cool him," said Ludlow; "but I drink no wine—it is never found at my table,"
 - " Hang me if I dine with you, then."
- "It will be time enough to refuse when you are asked."
- "What says the Apician code, 'Dinner without wine—magic lantern without candle,' Long comme un jour sans vin!' &c. And Belasyse helped himself to a lofty goblet-full of sparkling nectar.

Ludlow called for a glass of eau sucré.

"Pleasant beverage, Ma'am, for an elderly gentleman!" said Lord Belasyse, gravely, "Mais chacun à son gout!"

"Indeed!" returned the non-comprehending lady; "but perhaps the gentleman likes good eating."

"Depend upon it you do him more than justice. What is your usual dinner, Ludlow?"

Water-gruel of the best; or at Christmas an old hen."

"Make it a larded capon, or a dinde aux truffes, and I will say you keep the day like an orthodox Christian."

"The truffles, I believe, are very bad this year, my lord," said Mr. Hedgely, trying to get into conversation with him.

"Bah, bah!—that is a cry which the turkies have raised, depend upon it, sir," replied Belasyse, with his mouth full of a portion of the bird he gave credit for such shrewdness.

Mr. Hedgely reddened, as if half inclined to

" Madam, you would indeed be surprised at Mr. Ludlow's dinners,-let me introduce him to you," continued Lord Belasyse, enjoying the wonder of the pretty rustic as she leaned on her husband's arm, rather retiring, however, from the strange-looking clergyman, "He is the celebrated wild man, Madam, who lives upon roots, debauching on the drum-stick of a barn-door fowl only once a-year, and seasoning his repasts with wine from the cellar of a Pre-Adamite sultan; while he chops up his meat with a hatchet, and picks his teeth with a mattock, one of which he has got for every day in the year; -a singular instance of extravagance, Madam, seeing that he only dines once in the three hundred and sixty-five!" and sixty-five!"

Poor Mrs. Hedgely could by no means follow the noble lord's volubility. Her ideas were bewildered amidst wild men, roots, and poultry, pickaxes, and Pre-Adamite sultans, from which she jumped to the conclusion that a leap-year has three hundred and sixty-six days, because she was married on the 29th of February.

The squire perceived she was becoming a butt
for Lord Belasyse, and withdrew her from his
vicinity.

"Ludlow," said the Earl, "that is an execrable hotel of yours in Covent Garden. I called there for you to-day, and asked what they had for luncheon-rash man that I was; but there was nothing eatable, absolutely nothing. The waiter had the gout, which I thought rather a good sign; but he brought me a bowl of some abominable composition he called mock-turtle. What is it, do you know?-By the bye, I wish you would leave word where you are to be found. Villiers," for he had returned, laughing at Finchley's discomfiture,-" breakfast with me to-morrow. You may come, also, if you like, Ludlow; but all Girande's art will be thrown away upon you.-Good night, Villiers; I am going to sup with Powis."

What, again ?"

[&]quot;Again !- You do not call this supper?"

Before they retired, Charles took an opportunity of introducing Ludlow to Viola, who found him, though an extraordinary, yet a very agreeable person for a few minutes' conversation; for his remarks and ideas, quaint and old-world in style, were such as bespoke a well furnished mind and a clear head, while they could not be unpleasing to those whom he addressed himself to the task of treating with civility. He praised her much, as Villiers accompanied him part of the way home.

"You ought, indeed, to be happy," said he, "in the possession of her affections; but I hold marriage to be such a problem—I mean if, indeed, it ever takes place with the person you most desire it should; or, allowing it even to fall to your lot at a proper season, before you shall both have been soured with disappointment and grief for youth passed and time lost,—grief made more bitter as you become every day more conscious that it is unavailing,—still it is a problem."

"You have never married, and yet you speak feelingly, Ludlow," said Villiers: "you once promised me your confidence, let me have it now. Your life might furnish me with an example for mine."

Ludlow grasped the arm of Villiers with unconscious force.

"Example!" said he: "I trust not, truly. Some other time, Charles; some other time."

"Do you breakfast with Belasyse to-morrow?" demanded Villiers.

"What!" said the clergyman, standing still, and gazing in his face as though he was trying to make out his features by the dim moon-beam. "What! do you really, then, believe me mad?"

Really, my lord, said the fine quarttraffer, as he placed his master's clean - RASHY, my lord, Mousieur Girande is to very unhead

CHAPTER XI most from the court from the

"Ah, poor Apicius!—Alas! my heart bleeds for thee. How much art thou not to be pitied for living in so early an age and country! How many good dishes have I eaten in England that were unknown at Rome in thy day!"

DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

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11 Mean, Sunterd, were

"Well, Sandford, what is Monsieur Girande to indulge us with this morning?" said Lord Belasyse, leading the way into the breakfast-room at the head of numerous guests, including Villiers, Paston, a Peer or two, a fed Poet and a led Captain, Sir Thomas Brittlebank, a member or two of the Lower House, and a sprinkling of different sorts of men—differing, at least, in dispositions, but agreeing that here they got the best dejeuner à la fourchette that was to be had out of Paris.

"Really, my lord," said the fine spoken butler, as he placed his master's chair—"Really, my lord, Monsieur Girande is so very unbending, that it is with difficulty I can ever elicit the carte from him."

- "Menu, Sanford, menu."
- "He contends, my lord, that it is carte."
- " Menu, menu! What says the adage,-
 - Un menu sans defaut, vaut bien un longue pocme;

Eh, Villiers?—He is a strange fish!—However, let it be 'carte,' and let me see what it professes: in the mean time pray proceed, or rather commence," continued he to the assembled guests, who had now settled themselves at table: "I will answer for it that you cannot go wrong.—Let me see, fricasée de poulet à la Chevalière."

"A most rebellious-sounding dish!" said

"But an excellent good one, though it be a réchauffée," replied Belasyse. "Then there is truffe à la purée d'ortolans—good again; vol au vent à la financiere—very good; poulet de grains de beurre ecrevisses.—I think we shall have all the feathered creation!—Paté de foies gras—excellent; jambon glacé—a Galicia ham, I can tell you—hum, hum; soufflé à la vanille—detestable—don't tell Girande, though, d'ye hear, Sanford;—côtelettes de Présalé; membres de volailles en papillotte, &c. A poor breakfast, Monsieur Girande, indeed;—and, stay, les fruits de la saison, or rather, not of the season, I suppose, more particularly. And now," concluded the benevolently-minded Earl, "I pray that those appetites which are in all their morning glow and freshness may be abundantly gratified. What is Sir Thomas grumbling about?"

"The hour is too early for dinner, and too late for breakfast, my lord," said the Knight.

"Then pray wait for the one, and fancy the other eaten. A man that grumbles at breakfast will almost talk politics at dinner."

"If the wits are unequal to any other discourse, I see no treason even in this." "Treason against the stomach as well as the state it is;—for how can we presume to rule the latter when we have lost the government of the former, as every generous feeder should do? But now, I pray you, my friends, without attending to Brittlebank, breakfast as if you did not intend to dine, and then, whoever may be the host, dine as though you had not breakfasted. My Lords and Gentlemen, more friendly counsel I cannot give you."

The guests scarcely rewarded these faceties with the laugh they had earned, more particularly as the speaker was in the mean time fasting, albeit unused to the mood abstemious, and the only abstinent, for the rest had commenced an attack of unprecedented vigour.

Every potable wine of every delicious sort, coming in as a spring-tide, suddenly raised the conversation to the height desired by the noble host, who, himself more pleased to be silently and zealously employed, rejoiced in secret at the verdict of quiescat which his friends thus, not tacitly, returned.

Then were no temperance societies, yet Mr. Goldcrest, the poet, fond of his purée d'ortolans as he might be, adhered to the bright beverage named in our last chapter as peculiar to the princes pre-Adamite: his discourse, therefore, was thought by Brittlebank to want that flash of the poetic fire for which he believed himself celebrated; and his talents rendering him superior, indeed, to the many of his unfortunate brethren, had not, however, stood him in such good stead as to save his great name from a place in the Dunciad.

"Villiers," said the Knight, "our poet is, I find, coming out with a second attack of his prose."

"When had he any other thing in his composition?"

"Nay, I mean in verity, and not in wit."

"You take me with you, Sir Thomas, at least, as to the latter."

Sir Thomas took snuff, and to talk the said

"You figure in his last work, I hear, Sir Thomas," observed Paston.

Mr. Goldcrest shall excuse my appearing in any water-work," said the Knight, facetiously, helping himself to a brimming glass of bright liquor, "much as he may patronize the pure element himself. But I hear you are shewn up there, Paston, as the original from which Gay drew his Rake."

"I may be so; but defend me from seeing you as the apparition, especially in appropriate costume."

"Ha!" said the Knight, and changing his point of attack, turned to address the poet: "So Mr. Goldcrest, I find you have crammed us all into that book of yours."

"I should, indeed, be at a loss for character," replied the author, somewhat nettled, "if I made use of yours."

"Well, well; Chesterfield shines there as Lord Cicero Parvamult; Powis in Sir Ridiculas Mus; and a third, old Captain Trimmingstaff, as the nautical person, Benbow."

"Psha! you mistake all. Bentbow is an archer; the sailor is Admiral Sindbad," continued Goldcrest.

"I think it be the poet himself," said Villiers, in an under voice to Paston, "and Brittlebank the old man riding him."

The rhymer-turned novelist rose to explain; but the good wine had had its effect on his companions: the laugh was loud, and he failed to catch the ears of the company. Sitting down abashed, he took refuge in addressing himself to Villiers across the table.

"I have had the misfortune to be born a poet," said he: "I have had the folly to try prose; yet I may be excused, sir, as touching, or, I may say, in respect of the res angusta domi. My talents, I speak it with modesty, were in no wise unequal to the former undertaking, even without the advantages of an education I may boast of."

"No," said Villiers, gravely, "Poeta nascitur, non fit."

The poet bowed.

"But, sir," he continued, "I spoke truth in my works; and, leaving flattery to the multitude, I soared a higher flight, and told the world its faults."

"A second Juvenal!" said Villiers.

Again Goldcrest bowed.

"Sir, you do me justice; but the public did not. Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit."

"Wait a bit," loudly interrupted the Knight, bold from juice of the Tuscan grape: "Let me, Mr. Goldcrest, help you with the truth. You have forgotten that, to suit the depraced taste of the age, you wrote your 'Characters,' and had us all up—"

" Us again, Sir Thomas!"

"All," continued the unshaken Knight, "and because you escaped a beating for your pains, you resumed the gall-dipped pen as you thought; but this time the goose-feather only appeared, not the point."

"Sir,—my lord—this language, gentlemen!" rapidly ejaculated the rising prose-poet, without arresting the attention of his host—"hear me!"

"Hear the modern Theophrastus!" exclaimed

A sudden silence succeeded for the moment, as Goldcrest, on his legs to depart, made his closing oration.

"I declare," said he, with hand on heart,

" As a poet_"

"As a gentleman—and the terms are synonymous," said Goldcrest—" that there is not one character of all my 'Characters,' in which I have aimed at personality, yet everybody sees himself in the book,"

" Hard !" observed the Earl.

"But this is harder, my lord," said the persevering Knight; "his last work, which he meant

to be personal, is one where nobody sees him-

The burst that followed, like the spontaneous explode of many rifles, scarcely allowed Gold-crest's peroration of "mens sibi conscia recti" to be heard. He backed out, bowing to my lord, and his heel tripped over the protruding claw of a dumb waiter, which with its burden, a discarded and extremely high haunch of venison, covered the poet in his fall.

"Lucri bonus odor ex qualibet re!" said Villiers; and the presence of Goldcrest was known no more.

"Tea, or coffee, Mr. Sandford?" said Paston, listlessly.

The butler seemed not to comprehend.

"The Mochean berry, Mr. Sanford,—or the Chinese herb?"

"My lord admits neither to the breakfast-table, sir."

"Then they must be sought elsewhere."

Sandford bowed his acquiescence, and Paston withdrew.

"Think you," said the Earl, who had overheard him, "that he is gone in quest of what he names? Believe me, no.—Alas! poor Darwin."

"How,-the Darwin to be Mrs. Paston?"

" So he says."

"Considering the lady's pleasure as a thing of course—or of no consequence! But is she so much to be commiserated, with so rich a husband in perspective?"

"For riches—that is all bagatelle. They were,—as Carthage,"

"Or Troy, my lord," said Brittlebank, getting rather fuddled. "'Fuit Ilium; but 'delenda est Carthago!"

"Wonderfully sapient, Sir Thomas, and most learned! You have not, then, forgotten your schooling?" replied Belasyse. "As regards tea or coffee, however, Villiers, is it not extraordinary that people are unable to breakfast now without laying the opposite sides of the globe under contribution? By the way, I mean to quarrel with Meade*, for cavilling about substantial déjeuners;—that he of all men should seek to prevent us from getting the gout as we please. To be sure, on no one point are his brethren more likely to differ with him."

- " Have you read his book?" asked Villiers.
- "Read it !-Pah!-I threw it from me with horror the moment I saw the title-'On the advantages of spare diet.'"
- "Recommended, I presume, to the half-pay!" said the military knight. "To be serious, ministers would do well to avail themselves of this."
- " Politics, Sir Thomas?"
- "Yes, my lord; this bill for the prevention of appetite—the provisions of which, however, would hardly extend to 'Man,' unless, indeed, the act in question were your lordship's excellent breakfast."

Three distinct rounds of applause signified

^{*} The King's physician, par excellence.

that Brittlebank had said a witty thing, while at the same time they expressed the proper sense of the noble host's hospitality.

Mr. Publius Asper remained, of the whole party, the sole unapplauding guest. He was an influential member of the Lower House; and the Knight's allusion to the ministry, albeit in the moment of humour, had given him a fit of the spleen.

jected, that in the late economical measures of ministers—in short, my lord, I stand here a representative of that house, in which—that is, you will allow me to assume that some credit is due to us for our endeavours at reduction of the national burthens.—Forbid it, that I should decry the army, or seek to lessen their renown! No, my lord, we have too lively a remembrance of the glories of Blenheim, or of its storied splendour."

"Bravo, bravo! — Hear, hear, hear!" reechoed from end to end of the table; and loud laughter, however ill-bred, at which the honourable member became irate, and too far gone speedily to concentrate the rays of his vision, he looked towards that end where the explosion had just taken place, which, suddenly silent, the laugh was taken up, as in a catch by the other, in turn stilled as the stony eye of the member rolled its fine frenzy towards it.

Once more he had the ears of the house, and continued his rambling speech better than he had begun—a speech in which he praised, alternately, the ministry and the opposition; decried a standing army and upheld its merits; was personal to Brittlebank, and finished by proposing to divest him of a sinecure that he held, and his half-pay, instead of which the gallant officer was to receive a crown of laurel;—an arrangement he by no means came into.

Mr. Publius Asper now placed his hand on his stomach, in mistake for his heart, and lowered himself into his seat, at which the Knight rose, resentful of the late proposition. "As a soldier, my lord," cried he, with uncertain tones of voice, graduated like a cracked Æolophon—"As a soldier, I might be permitted to speak in defence of the army, my lord,"—here he gave the table such a bang, that his person re-alighted in his chair; but, rising once more, he returned to the charge—"As a soldier, I say, my lord, I might profess that I crave no reward—Dulce est pro patria mori—but as a man—": again he struck the table, and made all the glasses ring and dance; "as a man, my lord,—"

"You have forgotten your 'decorum," said a young officer of the Guards next him, laughing heartily, and pulling him back by the coattails—thinking, perhaps, that the sons of Mars would experience little benefit from such, or any other advocate, in an assembly now rather under the influence of Bacchus; and doubting whether, here at least, "the tremendous power of opinion" would the least avail, could he indeed sway it in their favour.

Unable to refrain from joining in the general laugh at Brittlebank's expense, Lord Belasyse arose, and led the way into an adjoining and more airy saloon.

CHAPTER XII.

Alas! our young affections run to waste, Or water but the desart; whence arise But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste, Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes : Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies, And trees whose gums are poison ;-such the plants Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants

CHILDE HAROLD.

"You have often asked for a relation of some points of my early life," said Ludlow, as he walked with Villiers in a quiet part of Hyde Park on the following day. "Do you still wish for this?"

Villiers professed his eagerness to become his confidant, the only one on earth, as the clergyman declared, that he would be;

and, composing his mind to the requisite degree of attention, he listened to a narrative of the principal facts which marked

THE HISTORY OF LUDLOW.

"I shall, without dwelling too long upon any of the circumstances of my life," said his friend, "merely relate what may, perhaps, account to you for the preference I am said to have given the solitary kind of existence I lead in the country to the society of mankind.

"That I do not wish to forego all communication with civilized beings, as you would, in contradistinction with myself, term them. my short annual visit to the metropolis may, I think, convince you; but when I say that I have as yet found no society to compensate for what I early lost, I tell the truth, and would not purchase the worldly opinion of the multitude, such as we meet here day after day, by the disguise of one thought or feeling, if that

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usually esteemed small sacrifice were to be the price of the highest distinction that could be conferred.

"You knew me as your tutor, merely; we mutually, I believe, esteemed each other. I found in you one too young either to interest himself, probably, about the events of my former life, if they were then recounted, or to exact from me a deference, or constant attention, which a man more nearly of my own age would expect, and, let me add, would have been disappointed of receiving.

"Of my family I shall say nothing more than that it was respectable, nor more than is necessary of the events, trivial and common in themselves, which led me to know Ida Clifford—led me to love her; for one could scarcely be without the second. She was a Roman Catholic; I was intended for the Established Church: she was allied to a noble family; mine, I have said, was merely a respectable one: besides, both of us were poor, and without expectations, she

being one of many children, and I having nothing but my talents to depend on, and the distant chance of a living, the incumbent of which was still young.

"Here were difficulties in my path. I could not drag her down to the poverty I saw myself, as I believed, foredoomed to, though she would have made any sacrifice for me that duty and maidenly propriety might admit; she would have done this-she might perchance have been led to more, had I asked it; but I loved her too deeply to allow the design of a clandestine union to have place in my breast till I was driven to this; but I must not anticipate. You hear of love, Villiers, every day-such as experience or profess the many self-idolaters we meet with in our constant walks amidst the multitude; you feel it yourself-forgive me if I deride a comparison between such-well, I will say their-pitiful trifling and the passion that moved me as an earthquake, or some stupendous convulsion of the elements. Feel such a love as that, and madden, as I did, nearly. She was beautiful—shall I compare her to your Viola? You may, for all men who entertain a feeling for some particular woman, liken those they hear of as perfect to the occupant of their own imagination. But she did not resemble her; though both might be esteemed lovely. She, Villiers, was a being of that unearthly mould, that she would strike upon the astonished sense as a vision—one whom it were presumption even to approach with thoughts of this world. She was too bright, too beautiful!

"Believe that you listen to a madman—I am content you should; for, when I touch upon the recollection of that perfect creature, I am carried beyond my reason.

"Talented, and gifted with an imagination that made her behold all things as good and comely, wherever she might be, it seemed as if her being there made Nature more lovely. Hers was the light step of the fawn, trackless as she went, the elastic leaves springing to her

tread, while she wandered through the oak forest of centuries, and brushed aside the fern and tall grass with her robe; yet a wild and playful girl was she, the child of fancy and affection, all heart, poetry, and enthusiasm.

"I was not then the wayward cold being, the repulsive ascetic man, you believe to know me now-but no matter. What months, aye years, of happiness I passed under the same roof with her! It may seem to you improbable and wild, the scheme her father formed of having me, a Protestant, as tutor to his sons. I had not then entered the church; but I had fitted myself, I may without vanity say, for it were childish to disguise the knowledge I had of my own abilities,-I had fitted myself to become, as I believed, in knowledge, one of its members. I had read for honours-I had grasped at every laurel of the schools, and possessed it-I had torn from the brows of the reputedly-brilliant, the bays they sought to deck themselves with,-I-ha! what idle words are these! To be

plain, I knew myself equal to any undertaking. I could not but be aware of this when I found easy to my powers, and grateful to my feeling of enterprise, the conquest of whatever difficulty seemed insurmountable to others. Let this pass: my reputation had preceded me, or rather led to my being eagerly sought as the preceptor of the young Clifford; and in an evil hour I became a member of that family which proved, in one of its olive branches, the ruin of my happiness, as I was the dread cause of misery to her.

"I had been months in the house before I was myself aware, and far, far longer ere she knew of the insidious poison that the constant presence of a being like Ida was instilling into my soul. Could I be,—was it in nature for a heart like mine, made of the most fiery materials that ever blessed or cursed man, to feel the consciousness of a perpetual vicinity to such a lovely girl; was it possible for me to be the constant companion of her rambles—not

often alone, I confess-to be the instructor of what she called her leisure hours, in many of those more abstruse branches of learning which women seldom try: could I be this, and in a thousand other nameless ways the chosen assistant of her every-day employments, and at length her confidant, without loving ?-But away !- This capability of feeling was not implanted in man's breast without some intention, beyond our feeble power of control, that it should meet with a corresponding passion elsewhere; nor that it should be doomed always to die away without conferring the happiness of an unreserved and eternal interchange of such friendly sentiments as exist nowhere but between those whom God has ordained, in the employment of a virtuous life, to work out usefully the gifts he has endowed them with.

"There was a priest of the Catholic persuasion, who constantly, I may say, intruded at the Cliffords. He looked upon me with a jaundiced eye—he hated me; yet I cared not:

I returned him hate for hate, but especially when he devoted his attentions to Ida. Her he seemed to have singled out for his peculiar assiduity; and I could, I thought, perceive at length, not a coldness towards me, not a decay of the esteem with which she blessed me, but a constraint, a reserve, an indescribable change of manners, perhaps unknown to herself, but sending into my heart a blighting influence that lay and settled there like the curse of some evil one—could such things be. But again freed from his presence, and forgetting, perhaps, his charges, she was all soul and sunny brightness.

"He was a shrewd man, the priest: clever, mighty in argument, but bigotted to his church, and blindly attached even to the faults of his country, which was Ireland. But for these I quarrelled not with him. We detested each other, I have said; yet he had less reason to hate than fear me, even than to love me. I did him service, and he returned evil for the good: but hear and judge. I am a prejudiced

man, it may be. It is a common incident I am about to relate.

"I had ridden out alone, as was often my practice. At these times, to enjoy the freer communication with my own thoughts, I usually avoided the beaten path, and plunged into the thicket, or crossed with rapidity the trackless wilds that bounded the Clifford's demesne. I yielded to none in horsemanship. I felt a desperate pleasure in adventuring leaps which many brave hearts, even with hounds, have left untried. But this is not to the purpose. With all my ardour for field sports, I had a romantic pleasure in solitude,-a passion for forest scenery in all its wildness. There is something so lonesome, so retired from the busy world, so apparently adventure-like in the deep, dark, solemn wood: there is a voice for me in the wind that passes over it, a wild music in the hidden rush of waters, and a beam of joy in their sudden sparkle as they emerge from the gloom of their secret revel, most congenial to the soul. Even now I rejoice in the wilderness, and my heart leaps again at the recollection of an intellectual pleasure, then made how much more intense, by the knowledge that there was one being in the world who might, at a future day, enjoy with me the delights of such sort of existence as she knew I loved! Alas, that consciousness, those hopes are passed away for ever!

gretfulness, unexplained to the heart, is there not in the solitude which makes us pant for some one kindred mind, some being who may feel all the high enthusiasm we feel, and know all our bright thoughts, subtle and too rapidly changing as they are, even for the exhibition of language, far, far too evanescent for the mind to record. This was the happiness to which I might not attain. Even had Ida been mine, I now think I might—I should—have failed in arriving at such a bliss as my soul desired, the inter-communion of thought, instant, simultaneous!

"Unreasonable being that I am and was, here on earth how shall so heavenly an attribute be known to man? An ethereal quality it is, and must ever be, this immensity of spread over intellectual dominion, so far beyond the grasp of any human mind,—boundless, mysterious as eternity, whose beginning was not, neither shall its end be,—too vast for the contracted span of man's imagination to comprehend, however splendid, however wonderful this may be.

"We lived in what is called a bad country—that is, the neighbourhood was untenanted by gentry, and lying, as the wild tract did, between two populous districts far away, it was peculiarly infested with trampers and gipsies. I had, however, met with no molestation. On the day I have mentioned, my horse, unchecked, had held his own way, and carried me down a lonesome lane, in the narrowest part of which I pulled up to catch the passing effect of a cloudy shadow upon the masses of foliage that

a vista in the near wood presented, when suddenly I heard, close to me, a strange kind of whispering, or rather quick succession of muttered sounds; and I will confess to you that, firm as my nerves are, I started on beholding, when I turned round, a horrid looking, halfcrazy creature, on her knees at my horse's hind feet, though somewhat towards the side. This mopping and mowing half-idiot, half-mad woman, methodical as she occasionally was in her madness, essayed to turn me from my purpose of going forward; but, disregarding her, and perhaps ashamed at having shewn any signs of affright, I walked my horse on. The woman rose, and at a bound again threw herself on her knees so directly before me that, without riding over her, I could not proceed. She held out her skinny arms and implored me, by the most pressing entreaties, for such I deemed her gestures, to turn my horse's head. I was about to dismount, and thrust her from my path and from the danger of being trampled, when I

heard a loud cry from behind. It was of a man's voice. I was in the Clifford's neighbourhood—could it be any of the family? Suddenly I dashed towards the spot from whence the cries proceeded, and beheld Father Michael, the priest, lying on the ground and roughly handled by two gipsies, stout men, who had sadly beaten after robbing him, and would, but for my timely interference, have soon put an end to his sufferings with his life. Suffice it, I saved him,-I saved him who was hereafter to be the cause of a moral death to me! Oh that it might have been by some other hand than mine, I often thought, after all had passed away like a dream, and forget that, in serving him, I had, perchance, in some sort atoned for the deep calamity I caused. Let me shorten this: I saved, but I still hated him.

"One of the ruffians was brother to the mad woman,—his name Giles. I saved him also from the law. The other was condemned. But had it not been for the stoppage occasioned by his sister, the priest would have been murdered. It was a wild idea of justice on my part, but I ceded to it, and would not appear against him. The priest also could remember but the features of the other. He was a bad man—Giles; but he felt grateful, and served me in every way he could. Mr. Clifford, however, had such strong suspicions of his being an accomplice, that he tried, by every means in his power, to have him convicted, and, failing in this, he persecuted the gipsy, who still haunted that country, to a degree that I feared would lead one of so revengeful a race to some deed of retribution, as he would believe it.

"Months rolled on, and the priest was about to take his departure for his native land.

"'I leave you, good Mr. Clifford,' said he, 'but soon I shall return, for it behoves me to be diligent and speedy in the work I have in hand;'—this was his language, and I thought his eye glanced towards Ida: 'for,' continued he, 'the vices of this world are quick to shed

their baneful influence around the head of innocence and purity.' He looked at me as he concluded. I could have struck him into annihilation at the implied taunt, but, coming up at the moment, he held out his hand, which I could not refuse, and eulogized me as the man to whom he owed his life.—Hypocrite and slave!

"He now blessed all the Cliffords separately; but when, at the last, Ida's turn had come to kneel at his feet, she burst into tears. Something too long, I thought, the holy man allowed his fingers to run themselves through the luxuriance of her rich brown hair, while he bestowed his blessing.

"He withdrew; and as his gaunt figure gradually receded along the avenue, and was at length lost to view, I felt relieved, as it were, from an incubus, that during a long night of feverish agitation had disturbed my rest.

"The words of dark import, which had escaped him when he looked at Ida before part-

ing, I did not understand, and for a time the whole passed from my mind; but her unwonted gravity and constrained manner had increased towards me, and was of late confined to those times when the priest's presence might have accounted for its existence. I determined, then, to elucidate this mystery, and sought an opportunity to extort the wished-for explanation.

"This soon occurred. We had now ceased to disguise from each other our mutual feelings. The attachment between us was deep and tender; I may say, from the peculiar circumstances under which we were placed, solemn. On both sides there was that dread, common, I believe, to young people, that our passion should be discovered; for this would inevitably lead to its overthrow, or at least to the prevention of all intercourse. Yet, what availed it that such should continue? There was no prospect open to us beyond that which had presented itself on the first day we met.

"In a remote part of the grounds lay a

favourite spot of the sisters, a wild and beautiful dell: it had been a year before the scene of an adventure, where my strength was of some avail in extricating their brother from the deep water that ran near—it possessed a greater interest for me; I had then first learned that my life also was precious. We wandered thither, Ida and I, and loitered about the dell. Each had some heavy load upon the heart, yet each, as we must have appeared to the other, was unwilling to break silence by inquiring what caused our grief. At length I tried to tear the veil from her heart; though the subject required words of caution, for which I was not at that moment in the vein.

"'Ida,' I demanded, 'why of late this cold altered manner, this constrained respect, this bearing, which I cannot describe? Something has befallen to vex you: speak, and make me the confidant of your griefs.'

"Ah,' replied she, 'the many that I have to

oppress me, the griefs that vex me, scarcely leave my mind at liberty to seek the comfort of a friend to console or to advise—nay, the latter I have.'

" 'You have, truly,' said I.

" 'Not here.'

" 'Ida!-I comprehend you not-linguist all

" I am very, very unhappy."

" 'My presence makes you so?'

"She made no reply but that of tears.

"'This is a bad world?" she at length said, inquiringly.

"'True,' I replied; 'but it exists as it was made; it remains as it was originally designed.'

" ' Man is generally worthless,' said Ida.

"'He, also, has seldom been better,' said I, surprised at a sententiousness that would at another time perhaps have amused me. 'Yet this world, bad as it is,' I added, 'and worse, as many of its inhabitants are, should not be worthless to you; to me it never can be, while it holds

Ida Clifford. But I see you have been told to consider me as one of the worthless—is it not so, Ida?

" She replied not.

"'I am to thank Father Michael for this!'
I continued; 'but he shall perhaps yet receive
his equivalent.'

"My manner may have been too energetic: I considered it not, and alarmed her; but still pursued.

"I see, I see it all,' I cried, vehemently.
The priest appears in his true colours.'

"'It is not against you, but your religion,' said Ida, at length; 'this indeed urges him to object to your remaining here, and for me—'

"'Well, Ida, what of you?' I demanded, stifling and subduing my wrath into a desperate calmness.

"Alas! said she, hiding her face in her hands, as she leaned against the bank, and burst into a fresh flood of tears; for me but one thing remains. I have loved you—

shame it is to confess it thus—loved you most tenderly, most truly; but now never, never more!'

"'How, Ida?' said I, passionately, as I grasped her hand, and held it, almost breathless with surprise and indignation,—but not at her. 'How, Ida—now no more: and why?'

"" Because,' she replied, solemnly, and drawing away her hand—'I am to wed another.'

"I flung from her, and started back, wonder and agitation rendering me almost speechless. Again I clasped her hand, and she resisted not.

Another, Ida!

" 'He is not of this world,' was the reply.

"'Ah,' thought I, shocked and astonished, 'this, then, is the vile priest's work—her mind has wandered!'

"But it was not so. She continued, more solemnly and with greater calmness, 'I am not to wed an earthly spouse; the cloister will soon be my home!" "I was, I believe, nearly frantic at hearing this. I stamped and raved in the bitterness of my rage.

"'Never, never!' I cried, with a vehemence that frightened the poor fragile girl. 'Never! They shall not sacrifice you, beautiful Ida,—no, no, we will have no such priestly work: the time has passed; it shall not return to free England.'

"'I have promised him,' she said.

"'It shall go for naught, Ida,—your consent was forced;'—and I leaped from the ground with rage. I was beyond my own control, and ran on in a strain of invective which it is to no purpose here to recount. By and bye I was more calm. 'I now comprehend the father's villany,' said I: 'he could cant about the justice of a holy inquisition at times, and while doing this, forge schemes for your perpetual imprisonment! I well remember how his eyes glistened as he laid hands on you, and thought how soon this glossy hair should become his

prey. I comprehend him now! But they shall not touch one lock, not one beautiful tress of this hair, Ida. Fear them not; trust to me, to your own faithful friend, and beware of this traitor priest.'

"'Ha! do not call him so; he is my pastor, and I reverence him,' said she.

"' Unhappy girl!' I cried, 'you will go, then, willingly to your destruction—to a living grave; but no, I will save you from yourself; and they shall never, never tear you from me.'

"With gentle violence I drew her towards me. I was distracted. I would have borne her from the spot; and she was in my arms, lifted off the ground for that purpose, though where I should have carried her I knew not,—for I thought not of it—when full in the front appeared her father.

"Villiers—that moment, with its wild delirium and its maddening misery, is a period of existence that will never die from my recollection—it was years, years!

"We had been watched, each word eagerly

listened to; the priest had ably done his work, and put Clifford upon his guard against the designing heretic whom he fostered. That night—aye, within that hour—I left the house, never to return."

CHAPTER XIII.

parts. Little and to or result to one that I the

Here I find

The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,

Which ebbing, leave a sterile track behind;

O'er which all heavily the journeying years

Plod the last sands of life, where not a flower appears.

CHILDE HAROLD.

"DID you think," said Ludlow, as on the morrow he resumed his narrative—" did you think that the expressions I had used towards Ida on that day were mere words of course? I said but what I would do;—I threatened, if threat it was, but what I would execute. Yet, what avails it that I tell you all? The night I have passed, after recounting to you some of those things which led to great unhappiness, has, in the revived recollection of its sequel, brought

again a part of my sufferings of old-sufferings which you or any other knew not of. Why should I tell you of these, or of my mind being carried back to past events, which, would it were possible, might be buried in eternal oblivion. It may not be. Last night I was haunted by visions of former times. Sleep, rest even, was impossible. Years passed over me with all their troubles, as vividly as if I still wandered upon that desolate wild of unhappiness,-years in the space of hours. I had thrown myself on my bed, and tried to shut out memory, thought, being. I wished for temporary annihilation till this trouble should have passed away. May you never, Villiers, know the wretchedness I have felt! You have, you will say, suffered: your sorrows have indeed been light, compared with the load of woe upon my darkened heart. Horror of horrors! - the nights that I have sometimes passed,—the sleepless, agonized stretched out as they would never end - nights that I have endured! I shudder at the remembrance of them, and tremble, as I dread that they have not yet left me. That the mind can sustain such, and still be!

"These thoughts bring again to mind the space of vacancy I spent afar from hence: it was in an ancient tower, a vast feudal fabric, rejoicing in its still unshattered strength,—but away!—what is all this to you?"

"Proceed, and tell me all," said Villiers, anxiously; "your slightest thought or feeling interests me."

"It was the solitude of solitudes," resumed Ludlow, in his strange rambling manner: "the fisherman scarce ever ventured near, for the dangers that lurked around. The castle stood close to the sea-shore, wild and solitary. At night I loved to wander through its suites of desolate chambers, or stand exposed to the storm upon its highest pinnacle. The hurricane that swept plain and ocean was the sole source of joy to me, swelled, as I could fancy, with the wail of death. I thought there was some

wretch more miserable than myself, yet I would gladly have perilled my own life to save his;—fancy was it, perhaps. The storm bellowed on in its might, and the lightning flash blasted things near, but spared me.

"Summer came; I grew weary of my abode; I loathed the sound of ocean,—its ceaseless noise upon the shelving beach beneath made me nervous with the hollow, sudden, portentous fall, as the calm but high wave advanced, curled, and dashed itself into foamy destruction; or the monotonous pebbly wash as it receded: the one seemed to speak in anger, which vexed my excited spirit: the other mocked me with its remorseful tone; yet this ceaseless noise would lull me into slumber.

"But if I slept, dreams haunted my wild brain with their torments. I dreamed of partings, the partings of affection—of those who were not again to meet in this world. Yet think not that what I have just recounted was the last I saw of Ida: you shall hear more of

her: but my visions, long after we had parted, brought her again to my presence but to part. My dreams were of partings, I have said, -partings of those destined to meet no more on this earth; unavailing regrets, everlasting farewells,long, hollow-sounding, still prolonged, lengthened out to eternity, farewells. I thought the word borne upon every blast. I was separated from her, yet sought her, was doomed to seek her for ever. I was confused in the long and gloomy passages that led, I knew not whitherit might be to another world: forgetfulness came upon me,-all but the sense of some dreadful misfortune. I knew that I sobbed, and that my heart was tearing itself to pieces with regret for calamities unknown, though felt; and, as I awoke, the whole would pass away like the subsiding of a great flood which has left all things desolate and dead. The last drive behalful

"I fled at length from a place where, in utter uselessness, I was wearing out my energies. I hated the state called solitude, and still I abhorred the presence of man; but I detested myself also, and this is the worst of all to suffer. Once more, then, I sought communion with my kind."

"But, before this retirement and return, what became of Ida?" said Villiers.

"True : you shall hear.

"I have said that my intention was to circumvent Father Michael's plan of immuring so lovely a girl for life in a convent. Oh, that I had let it pass! But still, to know that she was for the rest of her days, her young days, to live the wretched tenant of a cloister,—to see doomed to a life-long captivity, the beautiful, the good, the useful,—to think that the beneficent intentions of a power, whose wisdom it is not ours to question, should be frustrated;—here scorn not my short-sightedness, Villiers, I was blinded with zeal and passion,—that a being full of charity, and blessed with every gift that could make mortal life most highly prized, and loving an earthly object, should be profanely

plighted the spouse of that church to which her thoughts could not with all holiness be directed; that she was to be cut off from a world she rejoiced in, and her future living made of no avail, save in innocence from deed of harm, her mind beyond control;—this, I said, could never be the will of a designing Providence, which has ordained all beings to work out their way to future reward in the good they shall perform in their passing state; and, in my madness, I believed myself the instrument of that high power to save her from destruction.

"You will say that I was not disinterested. I grant all. Nor will I urge the excuse of youth and thoughtlessness; neither dwell upon the feelings which ravaged me, mind and body, after I was ejected from her father's house: these you may well imagine,

"The demesne of Clifford was situated amidst deep woods, and skirted by wild moors. The road to the nearest town led across these, but so traversed and intersected with numerous others, that, if not very well acquainted with the country, a traveller might easily become perplexed. For myself, being used to ride frequently across them, I would have confidently adventured over the moors on the darkest night.

"About six or seven miles from the house, there is a point or eminence surrounded by one of the dreariest heaths in England, marked by two huge stones nearly straight up, or but slightly curved, and leaning forward; they were called by the country people, the devil's horns—"

"It was a pleasant name!" said Villiers.

"It was an apt one," resumed Ludlow, "for they certainly bore a similitude to those ornaments of his Satanic majesty, if we may judge by his pictured representations; but whether these were naturally placed, or brought hither by mechanical means, of such prodigious might,—"

"Well," said Villiers, "it is of no consequence."

[&]quot;Agreed: I weary you."

[&]quot; Proceed, if you love me."

"These stones inclined towards the descent, and, from the eminence, you might view a wide spread tract of country on all hands: in one direction dark and desolate, in another wooded towards the distance, and beyond signs of human existence in the cultivated land; but of habitation none for many miles. Five roads, if such they might be termed, diverged from this point; and a finger-post, that had stood the storms of probably half a century, and which tradition gave to be a gibbet of old, stood in solitude, now divested of its arms, and merely telling the stranger that here his way might no longer with certainty be pursued, leaving him still in ignorance of the direction he was to take. Like the omen of antiquity, which forewarned man of danger, but shewed no type of means by which to escape it. The stones and post stood, then, a mark to the country people that they always kept in sight when coming from a distance, and attained before the track towards other points was ventured upon.

"Close to these was a deep dell of some magnitude, and of a circular shape, bearing traces of man's work, but bare of trees: it was ealled the Danish Camp; but more probably existed some Druidical remain; for the breastwork round it, if such it could be thought, seemed even too rude and irregular for those wild warriors. This place was, of course, peopled with fairies, and not seldom with gipsies, of whom there were various tribes, that, as I have before said, haunted the neighbourhood.

"It was six weeks before Father Michael returned to claim the promised victim. I had, by spies and emissaries, learned his movements. I went warily to work, my object to prevent the abduction of Ida.—Would I could now, after so many years, divest myself of the consciousness that a wish for vengeance upon the priest and upon Clifford had some share in the spirit that urged me on. This, indeed, had its effect: but I was, above all other con-

siderations, swayed by the stupendous power of that overwhelming passion which, when once awakened in my breast, had never ceased to burn with a consuming force; and now dammed up as it were,—for it was a flood of fire,—threatened to burst all bounds, and sweep away distinctions of relative, friend, or enemy, to assist me in achieving that object which I desired, or, in its devastating course, bear me on to madness.

"Though perfectly acquainted with all their plans, I had failed to procure a meeting with Ida. She was closely, yet tenderly watched. Letter, message, sight of her, all were equally unattainable, and I was condemned to feel that communication became every day more and more hopeless. Could I gain but one interview in which to advise her of my plans, and, as I doubted not, obtain her concurrence, I should for a time rest satisfied. And whom think you was my ambassador, my faithful spy in this matter, all-failing as he was to bring about

for me what I desired, -who but the gipsy, by name Giles-at least so he chose to style himself,-the man whom I, by my non-recognition in the justice-court, allowed to escape with impunity after the assault and robbery of Father Michael! You will say I used unworthy means, or worked with degrading implements: I confess it; but my own was the punishment as the blame,-my own, say I? Ave, but not alone. Remember, Villiers, I was then a young, a very young man. I was hot, and thoughtless of consequence. I speak now of my actions, as they then occurred, not as at a more mature age I trust they would have been moulded. I erred in mind and deed, deeply, deeply erred, and bitterly have I repented: Yet do not imagine that I seek to extenuate these, or that I imagine the racking, heart-rending remorse, the wretched agonizing life I have since known, can wash away the fault; but what are my feelings now to any but myself,-buried they have lain in my

own bosom hitherto, and buried they shall ever remain.

"For Ida, I could not doubt that her own wishes scarcely led her to elect that future mode of existence; and, once my own, I was secure that her affection for me would induce a speedy forgiveness of what she might at first condemn.

"I had laid my plans, then; and on the morning of her intended departure, for I still hovered about the neighbourhood, I saddled my horse, and providing myself with pistols, was before daylight within a mile of the station I have taken some pains to describe. Here I was met by Giles, also mounted, and we rode together towards the guide-post.

"I knew the party we expected would be small; else, though the immense muscular power of the gipsy was well worth that of two ordinary men in a death-struggle—else I had strengthened my own resources; but I commanded the ruffian to use no violence, and our

arms were merely for the purpose of self-defence. They whom we watched for were but three—the priest, a groom, and Ida. The holy father was, I knew, no great horseman; the second had before made me acquainted with his lack of mettle, and I built accordingly upon these circumstances.

"Three hours had passed away, and still no signs of the party. In the meantime I had formed my design, and communicated the same to Giles, after which we had little to say to each other. He was the apparent personification of patience,—a man of that deep stern immobility not easily roused, but once at work, the devil had been easier to lay. He now stood leaning against his shaggy but powerful horse, which he had in all probability stolen, looking occasionally at the line of track which we expected to be peopled, and now again glancing his black flashing eye at the heavens, as if reading the weather, or his fate,—I could not

tell. My own anxiety it would be hard to describe.

"It was a cold misty day, at the end of October, and the blast howled fitfully across the face of the country, making itself heard around the two masses of stone and the remnant of a guide-post. The place where we stood bore little sign of vegetation, except heath, and the whole scene was wild and solitary. We were now in the dell, and its only tenants,—listening for the approach of Ida.

"'Giles,' I said, at length, losing all patience, 'mount your horse, and peer out. Go back as far as the narrow wind in the track, and by the old heap of pebble-stones, there you can get a glimpse far along, and see if they are yet coming.'

"He tightened his horse's girths, and mounted without speaking.

"'Remember!' I said, 'when they do come, you are to shoot the groom's horse, if he makes

any stand; but if I know the man, he will scarcely give you the trouble: Father Michael's beast you have only to seize by the bridle, and as he rears, help the rider gently off by the foot, should he require thy aid, and then let his horse go. The lady,' I added sternly, is 'my part—do not offer her any molestation, by word or look, even.'

"He muttered something, and departed, riding slowly up out of the dell. I resigned myself
to my thoughts, trusting implicitly to the timely
information of my faithful scout; and, sitting
down on a loose stone, held my horse's bridle
carelessly, with a slackened grip, while the
animal cropped the scanty herbage within his
reach, when the distant report of a pistol caused
him to start. The rein was jerked out of my
hand, and the frightened beast galloped up the
ascent, in an opposite direction to that from
whence the sound proceeded.

"Vexation, anxiety, and a thousand conflicting but momentary feelings took possession of me, till I cleared the dell; but these gave way to rage and madness, when I perceived, totally beyond my power of interference, the scene which now presented itself. A horseman, whom I supposed to be the groom, and a riderless horse, were galloping with all the speed of fear away from the spot, where stood a tall figure, apparently unhurt,—the priest, probably, for he was at some distance; but in another direction, and with a frightful rapidity, across the moor went Ida,—her arms raised in the attitude of imploring assistance, and at her horse's side, which he seemed to be leading with one hand, as he held her on the saddle with the other, rode the accursed gipsy.

"Away!—like the whirlwind—on they went.

I raved, I stamped, and tore my hair!—'Fool,
fool—madman!—to trust a villain near the precious being—my own horse far out of all reach."

"Where went they?" demanded Villiers.

"Where!—aye, where—miles off, towards a thick lonesome wood, which, from its being the

supposed resort of all the ruffians in that part, convenient, from its rocky hiding-places, was never approached without dread by the country people;—tales of murder and robbery,—it was far from Clifford's;—and here the hell-hound dragged the helpless girl. My only hope is, that by some easy and merciful death she was soon taken from this world."

" And __ ?"

set thruth

"Enough of this. I never saw or heard of

Some minutes silence followed the conclusion of Ludlow's tale, which Villiers had too much respect for his feelings to interrupt. The narrator resumed.

"You knew me afterwards a clergyman, and the sacredness of my office I trust I have never disgraced. The interim was a blank. The present, and on this earth the future also, may well be styled the same. You will now forgive my occasional fits of absence—my absurdity, if you will. I sometimes try the latter to distract the mind, and prevent its preying upon self; but I feel, although content to wander here till called, that there is nothing, no, absolutely nothing, now worth living for."

That Villiers would gladly have learned more of Ludlow's after-life we may well imagine; but he forebore to make the inquiry: nor is it to be believed that the latter could with patience dwell on every little circumstance that attended the fruitless search, or the suspicion that might have attached to him as a participator in the plot. The grief of Ludlow had been stronger than words could show: his existence had since been miserable; and, as he implied in conclusion, all was comprehended in that one sentence—" I never saw her more!"

When we meet with so strong and energetic a mind, warped nearly to overthrowing by the violence of human passions, turned from its

proper course into a channel which Nature in her wilfulness of mood has, in comparison of that rough and lacerating passage, where the crags and obstacles of severer virtue stand out in horrid relief, smoothly paved to the view,where religion has failed to arrest the progress of such passion's stream, or by the too light consideration of her precepts, has been mistaken of him who consulted her; we resign, in almost hopeless regret, the task of searching after a love that may be termed true and perfect. We look on this hand, and on that; we cast our eyes around, and consider the numberless individuals whom we meet. But we turn disgusted from the contemplation, and deny the existence of a passion that shall be termed perfect. Whatever may have been the young imagination of our hearts, we revolt from the further inquiry, upon finding that we have wandered on through the maturer years of our life, without discovering its existence, as we pictured its beau ideal, written on man's heart in characters of fire, pure

and lambent, but bright and inextinguishable as the flame of a vestal's lamp.

Never! A passion such as this; fervent, deep, solemn-coloured, as it were, like a softened twilight, still bearing the rich glow of that genial sun which will, with unsubdued brilliancy, appear on each succeeding day, so rarely meets our touch, that the visionary pencil evades us, and we sigh in its relinquishment, as doubting even of what we appear to behold, and record the occurrence of its nearest approach to excellence, as a mere hallucination of imaginary existence, to which we have been led by the so long dwelling upon hope, as to believe it was the reality of attainment. I speak of man; for I believe that any sentiment or intentional resolve-be it formed upon the basis of passion, be it the fervour of faith, or of anticipative hope, or any other virtue that may subsist in the heart of a well-principled woman-will be as free from the corrupt dross of a so-styled similar feeling in the rougher sex, as the light of day is superior

to darkness. True, she may not be, and, save in rare instances, is not, gifted with a strength to work it out, because Nature has made her as the weaker vessel, timid and dependent upon man; but examine, if it were possible, her heart and mind, and test these by the analysis of after and unlooked-for occurrences, and you will pronounce that in such a woman the principle on which her resolution was formed, has never for an instant deserted her, although she may have in actual fact been borne down by a power which she feared, or by a reasoning which she has not been skilful to overcome.

These are reflections which, it may be said, have little to do with the progress of our history: in all courtesy I concede this; but if I should excite in the companions of my journey, as they for the moment close the volume, and run rapidly over in their mind the many secret things they know, either in support of or against my argument, they will not be unrequited for having read them.

There is a pleasure, not indeed at all times unmixed with pain, which attends the conviction that these " many things" are secret. Our hearts glow with the remembrance of a multitude of facts and thoughts, which have passed for ever from the recollection of our fellows. It may be, that the silent grave now holds the once lively and other sole possessor of the same beautiful and wild imaginings that have been, and which we now call to mind, or which come uninvited. It may be that the thoughts, deep, hidden, secret now as that grave, or one which will, how soon we know not, hold the repository of our own reasoning faculties, have never been known by mortal; and unavailing indeed would be the regretful wish that, as Ludlow expressed himself, should urge us to the desire of grasping so visionary a happiness as his heart demanded.

But such speculations lead us on and on, too far for our contentment or satisfaction. We thirst for the knowledge that we cannot define; we revel in the fields of fancy and of memory; we set out on an ideal—a fairy-voyage; but, long ere we arrive at the point which we imagine might be its conclusion, we are wrecked upon a shore, necessarily though unconsciously approached, and left to writhe against the sharp rocks of bitterness, whose shelves the treacherous current of our thoughts has drawn us over.

Still we thirst; and, insatiate as we are, who shall tell us of those mysteries which tantalize with a dim perception of their existence, but refuse to elucidate themselves to the sense?

END OF VOL. I.

London : Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES, Duke Street, Lambeth.



VILLIERS.



LONDON:
Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES and SONS.
Duke-Street, Lambeth.

VILLIERS:

A Tale

Ο¥

THE LAST CENTURY.

"He may worthily, and with honour, bear the cinquefoil."

GUILLIM.

VOLUME II.

LONDON:
WHITTAKER AND CO., AVE-MARIA LANE.

1835.



VILLIERS.

CHAPTER I.

Oh! how hast thou with jealousy infected
The sweetness of affiance!—Show men dutiful?
Why so did'st thou:—
Such and so finely bolted did'st thou seem;
And thus thy fall hath left a kind of blot,
To mark the full fraught man, and best endued,
With some suspicion.

SHAKSPEARE.

"VIOLA," said Villiers, on a subsequent morning, as they found themselves alone together at Lady Wilmington's—"Viola, are we not wasting time; do we not trifle with fortune, and lose our moments in this temporizing way of life? Why will you not allow me to claim this hand, as I already know I have your heart, though not by words?"

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"Because, Charles," said she, rather agitated by the demand, "I am convinced that your doing so would be vain. There is perhaps an indelicacy in my thus speaking to you, when I permit you to stand in the light of one who is addressing me; but you cannot have remained till now ignorant that my parents are against, not only our union, but even our frequent communications; and while my conscience tells me that I am wrong in yielding as I do to—in short, to the pleasure I do not wish to conceal from you that I take in your society; still I find it impossible to consent that you should take a precipitate step, which would too certainly deprive us at once of all opportunity of meeting again."

"Viola, Viola," said her companion, "what is there that they would refuse you, when they discovered your happiness to be involved in the denial. Are you not an only child,—and will they wantonly blight all your future enjoyment of life, think you?"

"Ah! this between us, Charles, is very

weighty reasoning, no doubt; but with them it would be of little avail: nor, indeed, can I persuade myself that it is more than sophistry."

"Sophistry, Viola?" said Charles, with vehement impatience.

"Stop, my dear cousin," interrupted she, "do not get into a passion because you find me too much, or too little perhaps, of a philosopher. Brought up as I have been, my poor twenty thousand pounds would go a small way towards our support; and although love and a cottage—"

"Viola, do you wish to drive me mad? What on earth has a cottage to do with my proposal?"

"Much; for it would inevitably follow—that is to say, if you obtained their consent; but you interrupted me too soon. I was about to say that, left by my parents early to form my own conclusions without bias from them, and without let or hinderance—"

"Amazingly fine!"

"Thank you!-Such being the case, I have as little of the romance of an ancient heroine

in my composition, as I have of the ideas of a modern fine lady."

"Too much, too much, Viola, of the one, and too little of the other."

"Thank you once more, beau monsieur!" rejoined she, making a low curtsy. "Perhaps," she continued, with a smile, "I am wrong in wishing still to enjoy what society pleases me best; but I know your vanity will forgive me, since I sin in your behalf,—because you are a man, my dear cousin! For if I do not consent to your proposing, it is that I may continue to have the honour of your own most delectable society."

"Well, Viola," said Charles, who had most impatiently listened to this homily—"Well, you are the most incomprehensible of women; and, rejecting sophistry, or philosophy, or what you will, you are yourself the most provoking little sophist that ever existed. But, mark me, I will yet reason you out of your present resolutions."

"Never, never," exclaimed Viola, laughing, and shaking her head: "I am as firm as a rock; you would but speak to the winds."

"Or to a woman," said Charles, testily, "an element nearly as variable."

"Dangerous ground!" said Viola. "But come, I will not be angry with you; though for so unkind a speech," continued she, in rather a faltering tone, "you really deserve that I should—"

Charles took her hand.

"I meant it not to seem so," said he; "but I am scarcely myself always: yet, promise me that you will never think less fondly of me than at this moment. Tell me here, that whatever may happen—"

"Fear not me, Charles," said Viola, firmly,
"I have given you all in my power—my heart,
my affections,—what you please to term it; I
cannot give and take back at pleasure: indeed,
of this you might, I think, be certain by my
conduct in the presence of others. Think of

me as one who is above the affectation of denying that she—Well, there,—you need not devour my hand."

They had turned from each other, and were gazing intently out of different windows, when Lady Wilmington entered the room.

"You seem most agreeable society for such near relations!" said the Countess. "Viola, Madame Brocart waits to show me Miss Darwin's trousseau. Would you like to see it, also? Perhaps there may be something fortunate—Nay, Mr. Villiers, you have nothing to do with these affairs. She is to be married to Mr. Paston in a fortnight."

The bell was rung, and the marchande de modes entered at the head of a file of her attendants, bearing band-boxes and baskets; and in a moment the room was filled with a glittering display of Brussels lace and satins, and all the thousand et ceteras indescribable of the uninitiated.

Villiers made his escape, amid the light

raillery of the Countess, who reminded him that he was to meet some disagreeable people of the neighbourhood at dinner that day.

The said dinner at the Wilmingtons was, by the way, fruitful of contre temps for our hero and heroine. In the first place, Villiers was disappointed of sitting next Viola, who found herself taken down by Paston, and Miss Darwin usurped her place exactly opposite. This was provoking at the time to all parties; but Villiers found his companion so agreeable, and, spurred on by the wish to display, perhaps, in the eyes her bridegroom elect, so witty and spirited, that by degrees he forgot, in the charm of her society, the privation he had sustained in being robbed of Viola.

The ladies withdrew, and the conversation turned upon painting, sculpture, and, lastly, music. The Passion-week was discussed, the Cross of Light, the splendour of St. Peter's, the Sixtine Chapel, and the Miserere, which sublime service, indeed, overwhelmed and drove out of the field Michael Angelo and his devils; and the "solemn temples," the gorgeous pageants, the vast and awful halls, sacred pomps, magnificent sculpture, and terrific paintings, faded before the discussion of modern composers and modern music. An elderly Peer took up the theme.

"Music," he observed, "is, it cannot be denied, greatly upon the decline. Of the present race of composers, or of those who have lately departed, I allow the meed of infinite praise, if, indeed, my approbation can be of any weight, but to two or three. Handel, Bononcini, Corelli, Geminiani-these men have been worthily pronounced perfect in their way. Of the past and present, Porpora, Nichola Haym, Veracini, and, ave, Pergolese, too long suffered to languish in obscurity,-these, also, have earned their bays; but who shall be compared with the great master, Leo? he, indeed, so far transcends all who have attempted to rival his amazing talents, that fame is blinded to the deserts of a host that has come after him."

Villiers defended a fayourite of the day, whose name has long since sunk into oblivion, but who, from a few productions in which the concord of sweet sounds, however plagiarist and trifling, pleased for a season, or for a month, had succeeded in mounting one step of reputation's ladder.

The Peer listened with studied respect, and there was perhaps some show of benevolent condescension in his deportment while he abstained from interrupting the speaker. A pause on the part of Villiers soon allowed him to reply.

"Far from detracting from the merits," he said, "of any favourite of yours, let us inquire who there may be at the present day that can perform the compositions of the masters that have gone before. Why, even the composers of this day cannot find any to execute their works; nor can they, indeed, themselves explain to others the true expression they intend shall be given to their productions. No, no; set them altogether aside, an after-day shall

perhaps give its correct decision upon their merits; but the ear, I contend, can never again be gratified as formerly with the perfect performance of a perfect composition."

This, we may now think, was going somewhat too far; as could the Peer have heard the wonderful and enchanting performance of Giardini, who appeared in England a few years after; or, later, the ravishing melody of Mori; or witnessed the astonishing, though perhaps less pleasing powers of Paganini, had not prejudice warped his judgment, or time deadened, as it will, the faculties of enjoyment once so eminently possessed, we must believe that he would have pronounced execution still with us, and, it may be, have discovered the loss of some other talent which rendered perfection impossible.

"You are fond of music, Mr. Paston?" said Lady Wilmington, as the rake entered the drawing-rooms. "Miss Myddleton has been delighting us with a song of Pescetti's*, which,

^{*} A composer of the day,

perhaps, you have never heard more beautifully sung, from the Asilo d'Anore."

Paston bowed towards the object of her ladyship's praise, but affected to shudder at the Italian sound.

"Spare me, spare me, dearest Lady Wilmington," he exclaimed, turning away from the singer; "if you have any compassion, spare me the agonies of hearing the very name of music for a space. My ears have been assailed with amore and core for the last two hours. I have been destroyed, absolutely destroyed, with a repetition of nini and niani, which my Lord of M— has been pouring forth in torrents, absolute torrents; and your friend, Mr. Villiers, nearly as incomprehensible, or perhaps more so, since he patronized that acme of obscurity, Spallanziotti.—What it has cost me to pronounce his distressful name!"

Paston now glanced at Viola, to see if his exordium had produced any, and if any, what effect upon one whom he had singled out to play

off against the ostensible object of his present attentions. Much he feared that he had been unwise and impolitic in thus openly decrying Italian music or Italian sounds; but Villiers was near, and towards him he had of late assumed a degree of causticity, which, from want of energy rather than lack of wit, scarcely came up to that measure of tartness to which the discontented rake aspired. Had any asked his reasons for this conduct, he would not have gathered resolution even to inquire of his own mind,—all was caprice. But upon Villiers, as upon Viola, his languid shafts fell pointless; true, such trifling was not entirely without its effect.

Here was the charming Darwin also, now thrilling all hearts with her splendid voice, and listening to the civil things of Villiers with a rosy blush, such as the vapidity of Paston had been unable to raise. Truth to tell, her heart had not till now remained untenanted by another and a far different being, how distant from Paston in all things she dared not encourage the rising sigh to tell; but the latter had his reputed large fortune,—and a most excellent reputation this is; one that covers so extensive an array of sins, that mothers and daughters are even tempted to estimate it as a cloak of equal dimensions with that of charity herself: besides, a rake may be reformed.

Never condemn too hastily manuscript music, it may be the lady's own composition. Paston did this: Villiers, also in ignorance, praised it—praised highly; for he really thought Miss Darwin's song extremely beautiful; but Viola was near, and our hero's commendation was tempered by the fear that too extravagant a sally might not please his liege lady-love, as directed to any other than to her. Paston had slightly offended; but unaware of this, he turned away to join the Myddletons, perhaps not too well pleased at the complacency with which the songstress listened to eulogy not his own.

But, as he approached Viola, the young Duke

of Cumberland detained him, even by the button, to congratulate, as a bridegroom elect, the happy possessor of so many thousands a-year. Scarcely nineteen, but entering into the spirit of Lady Wilmington's parties, here stood the Duke; all acknowledged his attainments and precocity, and all were proud of the honour so high though so juvenile a personage conferred by his presence; and he went from house to house without parade, pleased and giving pleasure.

Here then he stood, an accomplished young prince, colonel of a regiment of Foot Guards, therefore a warrior, detaining Paston by the button, and dazzling the astonished Hedgely with the first star of the garter she had ever seen blaze from the coat of a royal duke.

"She is not pretty, certainly," said Mrs, Myddleton to her daughter; "she is not pretty, nor has she much money—but it may do—"

"Whom do you mean, mamma?" said Viola, whose eyes were unconsciously fixed upon the lady and her cavalier for the time. "If Miss Darwin, I must dispute that; for I think her very pretty—beautiful. And for whom may it do?"

" For your cousin, Mr. Charles, and her-"

" How,-what possibly can you mean?"

"That they are to be one?—Nay, I said not that; but that they desire it, and that the world gives them credit for the wish, I do say, and believe the report. As a relation, I cannot help being glad that he should be settled, as you may suppose; though, my dear Viola, I fancy you have not always given me credit for such good feeling."

"Oh yes, mamma, every credit, I assure you;" faltered forth her daughter, turning red and pale in quick succession: "good feeling! Oh yes, but—"

"But what, my love? Oh, you mean Mr. Paston. True, that was to have been; but I fancy it is all at an end now. Do you not perceive how he avoids her, since a knowledge of the truth has at length reached him; and do

you not perceive how delightedly, and with what parade she is listening to your amiable relation? You must be glad that he is not bringing, as usual, all eyes upon you, with his persecuting attendance. Really he is too disagreeable and absurd."

Charles exposed to these accusations !- Oh, that her ears should receive such sounds; that she should be condemned to hear such treason uttered against her bosom's lord! She would have suffered any penalty rather than that his feelings should have undergone the slightest shock, or his fame have received the tarnish even of a breath. And yet, could her mother's wily hint be well grounded? But lovers are always too ready to admit the insidious poison of jealousy. What sudden transitions do they not experience-how dreadfully alive are they not to every whispered fancy-what reasons do they not falsely assign-what pangs, what miseries, do they not create for themselves? Aye, even though these may last but for minutes, such

minutes are each a century of torture, where doubt and resentment, and all that burning essence of regret, mortification, anger, and love, is saturating with its deadly venom the whole human heart.

It was to no purpose that Viola, struggling against her own conviction for the moment, assured her mother that she had that morning seen Miss Darwin's wedding clothes, as she returned from her drive; Mrs. Myddleton had a counter-replication at hand. It was apparently still less convincing, when Madame Brocard's evidence was threatened to be adduced in proof of their novelty. Mrs. Myddleton persisted in ridiculing the idea of the present trousseau being prepared only for the future Mrs. Paston. As it was intended for the Lady Childers elect, so it would have served the hoped-for Mrs. Stanley, and in such good stead would it stand Mrs. Villiers, now that her views upon Mr. Paston had fallen to the ground.

"But let us move," concluded she, after giving vent to these scandalous and false assertions,— "let us move from this, for here is that dreadful Lady Cletherington, with her fierce eyes and her rouge: she is too shocking!"

And the mother and daughter came nearer to the harpsichord, as Villiers, trying to seize a favourable opportunity to leave Miss Darwin's side and join them, was entreated softly by Lady Wilmington to keep his position, and support the fair singer till the conclusion of a song which the Duke of Cumberland had asked for, and then, with boyish thoughtlessness, gone away without hearing.

Did we not say that Miss Darwin thrilled all hearts? She did,—yet, there was one who felt any thing now but pleasure from those sounds. No, Viola, for thee the enjoyment of that evening was at an end!

Villiers could not in gallantry quit the post assigned him, and he felt to its full extent the awkwardness of his situation; for Paston now stood gloomily observant at a little distance, appearing as jealous of his supposed rival as Viola had really become of hers, although she showed it not.

The last song was finished, and Miss Darwin about to rise from the instrument, when an agreeable German, who had with a ready pencil written an epigram, glided round Villiers, and put unperceived the paper into her hand, which done, he slipped away, intending, possibly, to claim due credit at a future time.

Looking round, surprised, but smiling, Miss Darwin perceived none so near, or so likely as she thought, to acquit himself of such a piece of gallantry as Villiers, and she accordingly supposed him the author of the verse. All but the German and the reputed epigrammatist believed the same; nor did the denial of Villiers invalidate their attachment of the charge. Called upon to read, she did so with a sparkling eye and great humour:—

" 'J'ignore si votre cœur est tendre:

Heureux qui pourrait l'enflammer!

Mais, qui ne voudrait pas aimer,

Ne doit ni vous voir, ni vous entendre."

"Oh, you admirable poet!" exclaimed she, as she finished this impromptu of half a century before, which the German, relying upon her ignorance that it was the Duc de la Trémouille's, intended the next day to be known for his own. "Oh, you civil gentleman!—Come here, Mr. Paston, and take example.—What, you refuse? Mr. Villiers, will you not 'brain him with your lady's fan?" Miss Myddleton, try if you cannot melt the ice Mr. Paston has encrusted himself with,—aye, pray do," concluded she, as Paston, without answering, turned away, offered his arm to the mother and daughter, and led them to the refreshment-room.

Villiers scarcely approved of this arrangement; neither was his fair companion quite satisfied. She saw at a glance that something was wrong; but trusted to a little management on the morrow to bring matters round. Surrendering herself to the care of Villiers, they entered into an animated conversation for a few minutes, alone as they were, still standing by the harpsichord; for the remainder of the company had drawn off towards the supper-room.

"Come, Mr. Villiers," at length she said; "Come, let us go also." But these few simple words were uttered in the most dulcet, most fascinating of tones-such as, if it is unguarded, take the heart suddenly prisoner; such as we all have heard or dreamed to have heard, even though it has been but once,-yet that once, if it was the only time, was perhaps such to our after sorrow. This silver voice, and a blaze softened and thrilling of her deep blue eyes, often unconscious it might be, while they threatened to rob of his accustomed quiet whoever they fell upon, now could not be resisted by Villiers. He scarcely heard the whole of her invocation; but he remarked, that the hand and arm which she passed gently through his, were the fairest, the most exquisitely rounded in the world.

Oh, dangerous moment!—where was he allowing his heart to wander? Dangerous for Viola as for himself! What was that momentary feeling in his breast?—for momentary we must hope that it indeed was.

He led Miss Darwin to the same room where the trio had preceded them, and he drank two or three glasses of champagne, perhaps to resolve some doubts that had lately arisen, and to cool the ill-understood excitement which he felt in every nerve. He was possessed-he was suffocated-he knew not what his sensations were; but he drank more champagne, and talked madness to Miss Darwin. He burnt-he consumed with some unaccountable passion; but whether it was jealousy of Paston now alone with Viola, or love for the fair Circe near him, or anger at his own conduct, and consciousness of his having been mistaken by Viola and Paston for the epigrammatist, or all of these, he could not tell: he knew but that he raged with some inexplicable fire and thirst, and felt as in all,

the all of his short life—he had never felt before.

It was a sleepless night for two of that brilliant party, but from different causes; yet each tending to distract. It was a crisis for a third; but her we cannot pity for escape, however effected, from a man she loved not, and whom, had she married, would have made her life miserable with his petulance and ennui: besides, we possess the knowledge of his being a ruined man; and there was the probability that, even had she been at the altar, he would not have summoned resolution to tie the knot.

The feelings of Villiers were as incomprehensible as new; but on the morrow they were mingled with repentance. He sought to persuade himself that he was not unfaithful to Viola; but this allurement towards Miss Darwin he could not shake off with the same facility. He was unconscious that it required only a vigorous resolution, and an unreserved communication with her who should reign supreme

in his affections, and her place would again be occupied there in all its singleness as before. He had in a moment, perhaps of pique, unwarrantable and unreasonable, himself the greater offender, been induced to increase attentions to another than Viola, which civility had commenced and accident continued; and, warmed with the influence of her society, he had been suddenly fascinated by a beautiful, a most lovely woman, to a degree of wild, but temporary passion, that so sanguine a disposition as his was but too liable to find an affinity for.

Nor must we hastily condemn Eleanor Darwin as heartless, or wrong. Early left an orphan, she had all the disadvantages of being thrown much upon herself, and allowed to follow the girlish dictates of her own will, unknowing the benefit of a competent guide to direct her pursuits, or properly to train and cultivate the excellent natural talents she possessed. She had all the disadvantages of birth and good

connection, without their requisite support,money; all the mortifications of poverty without sufficient philosophy to bear them; all the qualifications of a heart, warm and enthusiastic, yet few of the blessings by the aid of which she could avail herself of the pure satisfaction it might give, were this rightly directed. She was, in short, a brilliant body of light, eccentric and unsteady in its orbit, and from which emanated those coruscations that dazzled with their splendour even such as desired to find darkness about her. She was a "bright creation," a meteor that many followed, but whose course few could understand: the object of pursuit to numbers, but the attainment of none. She was an enchantment, a witchery, a wonder.

She loved, and was in her turn adored; but she was told this might not be,—prudence, pride, the world forbade it; and he who was the object, her equal in all things, had gone far away to tell his sorrows to a distant land: but still she loved. Oh, should she have listened

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to the words of Paston,—could she so debase her heart, and belie her feelings, as to smile on one whose every pretension was founded upon wealth? Vainly did she accuse herself in the solitude of her chamber for such pravity bf mind; and many a tale of sorrow could that pillow tell which, in supporting her beautiful head, had been the frequent repository of her sighs and tears.

We plead for her with the young and gay, with the separated, the tempted, and the unhappy.

CHAPTER II.

"I must confess that there is something in the changeableness and inconstancy of human nature that very often both dejects and terrifies me. Whatever I am at present, I tremble to think what I may be. While I find this principle within me, how can I assure myself that I shall always be true to my God, my friend, or myself? In short, without constancy there is neither love, friendship, nor virtue in the world."

ADDISON.

Vexed with himself, and much inclined to be provoked with Viola, Villiers knew not how to act. His thoughts were in such a state of confusion that he vainly attempted to reduce them to order; and he determined to become "the slave of Chance," and let circumstance work out her way. Explanation he was too proud to seek, and derived comfort, if such it could indeed be called, only from the belief that

he was wronged. But he was in honour bound to avoid all further communication with Miss Darwin, who indeed thought not of him except as the innocent cause of a rupture with Paston, which she was not long permitted to remain in ignorance of having occurred.

The next evening Villiers was again in company with the Myddletons; and, as perverse fate will often decree, at the moment he entered the room, fraught with good intentions, Paston was speaking to her. Deadly pale as she turned at this annoying circumstance, her face quickly assumed a deeper than natural flush, which was attributed by Villiers to a sense of guilt. He passed by with a formal bow, but sedulously avoided her during the remainder of the short time he staid there. Anxiously, at length, did she look round for him, but he had long gone; and to the mortification which this caused her was added an undisguised encouragement of Paston's attentions by her mother. Nor was he the only suitor; for some, whose rank would,

it was imagined, have entitled them to a favourable hearing by most women, had shown the strongest wish to raise her to the elevation of a Peeress. But to these or to Paston she seemed alike indifferent.

Another night of uneasiness, and another day of suspense, and no opportunity occurred for Viola either to hear or give an explanation. Again they met at a party, again Paston was at her side, and again Villiers avoided her; but this time his lip was curled convulsively,—it might be with a smile; and even the bow of the night before was not accorded.

To the pain of all this, on the part of Villiers, was to be added a fancied insult, and perhaps, in truth, received, from a young nobleman who had been a rejected suitor of Viola's, and who, at the supper-table, made some remarks which could not be directly applied to himself, yet which Villiers was but too ready to interpret as such. Often had he believed himself the object of scorn for the poverty of his circumstances,

and ridicule for his disappointment of that fortune to which, at least, he had never denied that he was heir; but now flushed with wine that he was unused to indulge in, he was on the point of quarrelling with Lord S——, when the Myddletons, attended by Paston, entered the supper-room. All his hate was immediately concentrated in this one man, and he hastily withdrew: yet, as he left the table, he could not avoid hearing the loud laugh that Lord S—— and his knot of noble friends indulged in, Villiers believed, at his expense; and shame of this ridicule, when he reached his own door, was the uppermost feeling in his mind.

That he should, amongst the many high spirits of the day, nobler than himself in blood, rich, titled, and accomplished, have walked unrivalled to the place he held in the affections of the greatest heiress in perspective that or many previous seasons had produced, is unlikely. It could not be, and was not; and some that pretended to her hand received more

encouragement from her mother, than had she not hated Villiers to the degree she did, these suitors would have found the advantage of. But Viola, true to the passion which she had first known, looked with cold indifference upon the coronet she might have lifted to her brow, and beheld heaps of treasure strewed at her feet without being moved to a more favourable sentiment.

As Villiers entered his bedroom a letter appeared, which the servant called his attention to; but taking it for a bill, it was thrown from him, additionally mortified as he became, at the recollection that there were no finances to answer such appeals. Slighted and disdained by those who had once courted his society, (for he now called to mind several similar occurrences to that evening's,) and jealous of the attentions which seemed well received by one woman, to whom he was deeply attached, while at the same time he was not quite able to acquit himself of entertaining a passion for another, few, we think, would envy his

situation; but if to these be added that he was absolutely penniless, it will be thought that pride was an unlikely inmate to be cherished in his breast. Yet a keen sense of the insult he fancied himself that night to have received swallowed up every other feeling, and he paced up and down the small apartment in a mood bordering on desperation.

"I have been insulted," he said, coldly,—
"wantonly insulted; nor is this the first time—
no, not by hundreds, that I have felt humiliated, when, for the very soul of me, I dared
not let loose the words that burned upon my
lips. And why?—because I feared the greater,
the wider ridicule which would attach to my
poverty, and the consequent loss of my place,
my station in society!—No, I dared not; and
I have gone to my comfortless home!"—and he
clenched his hands, and set his teeth as a vice,
to suppress the devilish feelings that swayed him
almost to madness. "And have I not reviled
myself, that could invite such mockery of my

helplessness? And yet I have returned to places where I knew that I was merely tolerated by those I should have trodden on and spurned, and I have crept dishonourably about with a mean petty pride that disdained to labour honestly for my bread. Ha!—independence and poverty, when were ye ever found together, in what the world has chosen still to call society? Why cannot I rush from this wretched, wretched mode of existence, and bury myself where there will be none to intrude upon my solitude—none to mock at, and insult? What is this secret fascination, that draws me unresisting into its vortex, but to thrust me forth again, contemned, ridiculed, and wronged?"

The feverishness of his thoughts broke and disturbed his slumbers. Long did he recollect that night; and yet he had passed many with nearly as bitter feelings. And this was, like others, succeeded by a dreary hateful morning, full of fears for the consummation of he knew not what.

The letter before mentioned lay totally disregarded, even forgotten; but one, directed in a hand he well knew, was in the course of the morning presented to him. It ran thus:—

"What, my dear Charles, (for so I must still call you,)—what has happened,—what can have happened between us? Help me to unravel the mystery. What has sprung up,-what cloud has thrown a blight upon our feelings, to make us doubt each other ?-it can be nothing more. Tell me what I have done, and I am ready to atone, if it should be necessary, and explain away your surmises, or your fears, if you indeed can have any. I dislike mystery; I love openness between two who are so situated as ourselves. Tell me, then, what I have done, what I am to do, and where lie the causes of our unhappiness; and then I will ask you if there are not a sufficiency of real ills in the world, that we should strive with imaginary ones. Believe me, I have not been without my share of misery since that evening at Lady Wilmington's.

" I will not, dear Charles, I cannot, think that you have entertained, and far less that you in truth do hold in your heart, a wish that I could not approve. Oh, if you do, may Heaven forgive you-but I will not, I cannot believe it. I am not willing to put too ready a faith in appearances. I saw you, as I thought, paying particular attention to Miss Darwin; I saw you put a paper into her hand, at the harpsichord—that epigram; it was needless, it was painful to me, I confess. You did not speak to me that evening. Mr. Paston came up as you turned towards me, -could I refuse to speak to him? Were you as you seemed to be, uneasy at his attentions? Indeed, indeed, you had little reason; my bitterest enemy could not wish me a severer penalty than I then suffered. I heard, but threw from me, as I do now, the insinuation that some warm feeling existed between you and Eleanor; they said, even-but this was too sad to believe. In the refreshment-room you were still with her; and you seemed carried away by some unaccountable motive to pay her the most extraordinary attentions, and talked in a strain, which I confess I heard through a third person; but it was the language of a man quite beyond himself-a language, Charles, you have never even presumed to hold to me. Still I was unspoken to; but I hoped this might be caused by some passing whim which the next morning would clear up. How anxiously I expected you; but you came not: the next evening too, and the next, and you passed me with a distant bow that-Oh, I cannot bear this state of doubt and uncharitableness. Write to me-or no, I suppose you must not. I have offended, I know, against all rules of propriety, in sending a letter to you; but there is too much at stake to think of this: I discard such ceremony and etiquette, when both our hearts may be saved a world of wretchedness by the infraction.

"Come, then, and see me immediately. I shall tell my mother that I expect you; and if this should be our last interview, which I

dare not think, I shall still have the satisfaction of knowing that I have done all in my power to drive away doubt and suspicion from between us.

" Believe me still, and ever,
" Your affectionate

" VIOLA."

The perturbation of Villiers' mind was scarcely lessened by the perusal of this letter; but before he could form any decided plan of action, he was surprised by the entrance of Ludlow.

"Welcome," said he, as the worthy man approached him; "you are come in the very time I could most have wished for your society."

"I am glad of it, with all my heart," replied Ludlow; "for, to tell you truth, I almost feared you had some desperate intention of forsaking the company of all your friends; since you have been strange enough to be taken for myself during the last two or three days."

"Ah, Ludlow, it was from herself that I met this."

"Well, well," said his friend, impatiently, " she takes the readiest method, the most upright, the most honest, the plainest, which is always the best, of clearing up the misunderstanding, by at once opening her heart and mind on the subject. I cast aside, as she has nobly done, the paltry consideration of miscalled indelicacy, in addressing you; that indeed would be sacrificing the happiness of both to vain form and absurd notions, which have in their adoption paved the way to more causeless misery than can be told. Explanation, explanation,calmness on the one hand, confidence on the other. Openness, openness, -these clear up doubts, renew love, remove mountains from the course of true affection and returning esteem. Oh, the lives, the separations, the wretchedness, the bloodshed, the crime, the remorse, that a little explanation and confidence might have saved in the world!"

But they will not hear, - these infatuated people,-they will not trust: they prefer desolation and horror, to smiling peace and restored joy; and, for the curse of man, probably it is ordered that thus it should be: alas, for him! And you, Villiers, -and you, hot-headed young man, hear me; -will you not be guided by the voice of reason, when she whispers her councils in your ear. Prefer you to be a wretch; love you to live in sorrow and unkindness; year after year dragging on your unfortunate existence,-not content with your own solitary fate, but condemning another also to pass her weary life in doubt and unavailing regrets for a fancied disloyalty on your part; while one word of open trustfulness, leading as it must to mutual explanation and forgiveness, would make you a happy man for ever in this world?"

Villiers was much moved.

"Come, my dear friend," continued Ludlow, "be upright, be honourable, candid, sincere, open, humble, for pride is the great stumblingblock. Tell her all you feel; pour out your sufferings-for that they may be many, in so short a space, I too well know,-tell them to her all: think not it may be romantic, foolish, or what you will. Who hears you but He that created both your hearts, and will look down with benignity on a virtuous affection and returning good will? What is written?- Love one another;'-aye, but with a holy, a peaceful love, with that devotion which would prompt either of you to sacrifice all the world's good, even life, if it were necessary, to save the other from woe-a holy love, which would undergo any privation and penalty, rather than prompt an action that should prejudice the other in mind, or body, or future weal. Go, go! Do as you would be done by-as you have been done by-aye, by one who, from what I have already seen, is a treasure few are worthy to possess. Cherish her love, and deserve her esteem, my dear young friend; and, having regained this, go into your chamber, and ask forgiveness for the bad passions which your heart has so lately burnt with."

Villiers might have profited by the lesson another event of that morning went far to teach, had his thoughts been directed to moralizing on the subject, namely, that he was not destitute of friends, and that those who were really worthy the title were not fast falling away as he had said. But unfortunately he set too high a value by the factitious pleasures of that society which even he, in his more reasonable moments, contemned; and, although he warmly and readily, indeed enthusiastically, did justice to the sterling qualities of Thornhill, as well as the rougher, though high and honest, bearing of Ludlow, these were not what he would totally have given up all connection with the great world for. But, as regards these elder men, setting aside the disparity of years, they could scarcely be supposed to seek much enjoyment from the society of one who had, by being too early introduced upon the stage of modish life, unavoidably

almost, been tainted with a passion for its levities and dissipations, which his strong mind would not, indeed, allow him to dip too deeply into, but which a want of means now only prevented his indulging in as before. There was little community of tastes amongst the three, and few objects in pursuit of which all joined. Ambition had been Villiers' great aim; but this was early blighted, though it can never, in the human mind, be altogether subdued: yet this ambition was not such as Thornhill's, who entertained that devotion to a life he had adopted never to change, which impels a man to look no other way, to see no other object worthy of attainment in comparison of the highest reputation and rank in his profession,-an elevation, how few out of the thousands that start with such hopes are destined ever to reach! Ludlow again,-it would be hard to divine his birth. He had assured Villiers that happiness he could never know: this, for so sensible a man, was an absurd position, for competence and health

should make a man contented, although his sorrows may have wrung the heart nigh to breaking, and these confessedly will ever and anon recur when least the mind expects them, but with less and less violence each succeeding year; and shall not the man, blessed with energy of mind, and strong reflecting powers, see cause to rejoice that such cannot last for ever? and shall he not, between each access of blasting recollections, unconscious of their former existence, shall he not feel happy? It were as sinfully rebellious against a beneficent God, to dwell upon the calamities of man's life, as it would be savage indifference altogether and for ever to discard them from the heart, when the storm has passed over, and left us purified by its chastening breath. We are to profit by the remembrance, and not repine. In truth, it would be hard to designate the aim of Ludlow: he was what Villiers had, in a word, aptly enough described him, a huge paradox, if a non-existent imaginary element may be thus embodied, and given "a local habitation and a name."

In accounting for these predications, to use a rhetorical licence, we must give the subject, and this is the entrance of Colonel Thornhill as Ludlow concluded his excellent advice. Whether at Villiers' age he would himself have adopted the line the latter struck out is a question that need not now be mooted—perhaps he would; at all events, that he could now feel as we must suppose he did, argues well for his heart, and the better ordered course of conduct that he had, however late, himself adopted.

These men knew too little of each other to draw satisfaction from their mutual society; and as the Colonel entered Ludlow withdrew.

"Well, you have got the letter," said Thornhill, after some unimportant remarks.

"Yes, I have received it." Villiers stopped in some confusion, as wondering how his friend could possibly be concerned in an affair he had every reason to believe was, save Ludlow, confined to Viola and himself. But Thornhill attributed his sensations to a widely different cause.

"I am not surprised," said he, "at your feelings. When I first received my commission, and found myself in a red coat and a pair of spurs, I thought that the earth could give no greater pleasure. It is a bad thing, Villiers, that this feeling should ever wear away; but it will, and does, too soon, particularly in the present race of young men. I know not what is come to them. I cannot understand a man not liking his profession."

"Ah!" said Villiers, wandering, "there is a good deal in that."

"A good deal,—every thing—every thing!
But let us talk over your affair. What do you
mean to do? You know my advice, and I need
not say, as far as it will go, my assistance also
is at your service. You cannot have two opinions
as to what course you are to adopt however."

Villiers thanked him most heartily; but said that Mr. Ludlow had been made acquainted with the whole business, and he should follow the advice he had given him. He would arrange every thing with Miss Myddleton that very day.

Thornhill stared.

"This is all very well, my good friend—this is all very well; but beware that some other man does not step in in the mean time, and then you may whistle for the prize; for I can tell you that there is great interest making."

" I know it all, sir," said Villiers, impatiently.

"You can marry her afterwards; but strike now, or you may repent when it is too late. Your horses will be the principal affair; but we will see what can be done. The regimental agents will, I dare say, advance us enough to start with, when they hear there is an heiress in the wind, and myself at your elbow."

"Horses!--why I have no idea of running off with her."

"Running off!-my good man, there will, I

II .JOY

hope, be no occasion for that. Did I not tell you, long ago, you had only to put on a red coat, and your aunt would be unable to refuse you whatever you asked. No, no, depend upon it, once in the Life Guards, if she were not your aunt, and married already, you might even make her Mrs. Villiers very soon."

"I am thankful that there are these impediments to the possibility of such an event," said Villiers, smiling; "but as there is no likelihood of my being in the Life Guards, we need scarcely speculate upon its effects."

"No likelihood!" said Thornhill, starting from his chair in amazement. "No likelihood—what—are you mad? Are you bereft of your senses? Do you rave?—No likelihood!—oh, that I had a boy old enough to take it! What—you refuse the commission,—you disdain the Life Guards!—I expected to find you dancing about the room for joy; but I suppose your friend the clergyman has, as you say, given you the best advice on the subject."

"My dear sir, hear me one moment,—there must be some—"

"Must be,—yes, indeed, thank heavens, we are not at a loss for them yet; the day is not come, Charles Villiers, when commissions need go begging, and in the finest cavalry corps in the world—aye, in the whole world; I do not care where is the other. But, good morning."

"My very dear sir," said Villiers, stopping him, I was going to say, there must be some mistake in this; but you would not hear me."

"What mistake?" said Thornhill, suffering himself to be led back to his chair; but still too much excited to sit down quietly.

"I have never received any commission; neither do I know what you have been talking about all this time."

Thornhill drew back in surprise.

"Why, did you not tell me you had received the letter?"

"True; but it was one that—in short, it was from a lady."

"A lady!" said the Colonel, in lengthened tones of contempt:—"Psha!—What, and you have never got mine, then;"—and the old officer began to snap his fingers, and exhibit various symptoms of returning good humour.

"See what it is to be in love! We must get you married off-hand, or you will be of no use, I see; and yet, a young married man in a regiment is a bad thing, too. But come, if you don't know it, I now tell you, that I yesterday got your commission filled in, and you are now Sub-Brigadier and Cornet in his Majesty's First Troop of Horse Guards."

Villiers left the room, and soon re-appeared, with the letter which had so contemptuously been consigned to oblivion the night before.

"I confess," said he, smiling, but with some degree of confusion, "that I thought your epistle was a bill; and as I have had too many of these unanswerable communications lately, I threw it aside, and happily (for I should not have opened it) forgot altogether the existence of such a docu-

ment; but forgive me, my dear and most valued friend, and let me thank you sincerely—"

"Well, well, that is of course;—but you accept it?—You need no advice from your clerical friend, who, I dare say, is ready enough with that, and deuced little else?"

" Nay, nay, indeed you wrong him."

"May be so; but you are one of us now, eh?

No rouge et noir—you must be altogether red, out and out—aye, and inside too; for the heart must be as red as the coat, or else—"

" I think you need not doubt that-"

"Psha!—now your face even is getting the colour,—I mean that the heart must go along with the trade, whatever it is, up or down, fair day or foul—in quarters or in the field—in the advance, in—"

"Every thing but the retreat!" said Villiers, striking in with Thornhill's humour.

"Right, my boy!—your hand upon that, and you'll do."

" I fear-that is-for I suppose I must fear

nothing now but fear — I apprehend that there will be much difficulty about funds for my horses and appointments, and all the thousand et ceteras."

"True," said Thornhill, pausing, in his way to the door, "you will have to marry the heiress, I believe; but, seriously, we must lay our heads together. As I said before, however, the regimental agents will-advance you sufficient, I have no doubt, when they know of your prospects. Perhaps the scratch of my pen may be necessary; but I would, I tell you candidly, avoid that if possible.—We'll see, we'll see.—But, come, rouse yourself out of this bedevilment,—'od, I wish I could see you safe under the messtable—not that I encourage drinking."

The Colonel took his leave.

Villiers knew not what to think of this altered prospect in his affairs. He remembered the words of his grandfather,—" never put on a red coat, sir, unless you are starving; do not think of marrying your cousin Viola,—and guard this picture as the apple of your eye!" And which of these had he not broken, or wished to break? True, he was not far from that predicament in which the alternative he was now about to adopt as to the first could, with reverence to the old peer's mandate, be by any means permitted. Besides, what did he owe a man who had deserted and left him to pine in want and poverty? Nothing. He was bound, he felt, by no real tie of obedience to his wishes, and he would not hesitate to break through all imaginary ones. As to marrying Viola, that might or might not be-the event hung upon a thread; he was by no means so certain of his position there as Ludlow seemed to be: and for his mother's picture, he trusted to be able to redeem it, if he could raise money for his outfit,—the parting with it had indeed cost him sore.

These interruptions had now made it so late, that he feared Viola must have given him up. Making a hasty arrangement of his dress, therefore, he proceeded direct to Grosvenor-square, his heart beating with many unutterable feelings, and as he knocked, he almost hoped he might not be admitted. But so little did he understand his own feelings, that he underwent the most bitter vexation when the servant told him that Miss Myddleton had been taken out a quarter of an hour before by Lady Wilmington. His mistress was at home.

"Is she alone?"

" No, sir, Mr. Paston is with her."

"Curse him!" muttered Villiers between his teeth, as he walked away from the door.

Viola had impatiently waited hour after hour, and at length, in despair of his coming, before Lady Wilmington called for her, as had the evening before been agreed on, she wrote a hasty note, which she had scarcely time to fold and seal before the carriage stopped at the door: this was not delivered.

As we gladly throw upon others a share of the responsibility which attaches to our own

conduct, when we have really lost all clue to guide us through the difficult paths in view, so Villiers now hasted to consult his original adviser, Ludlow, as to how he should proceed in this new perplexity. He foresaw but fresh obstacles in the way of reconciliation; and the persevering constancy of Paston's visits again raised a devil in his breast. "This man," thought he, and rightly, "is ruined: his fancy was for a short, a very short time, pleased with the wit and beauty of Miss Darwin; upon the slightest occasion, however-a mere suspicion,so poor a wretch, so used, so nerveless, gives up this fine creature whom he really had still found sufficient manly feeling in his heart to likelove he could not; -but in a few days he loses the interest that she had excited, and glad, perhaps, of the opportunity a fancied slight has given him to turn away from an object that he is already tired with, he addresses himself to the pursuit of one whose riches he believes will at

Lave. He treated that

least repay him for the wretchedness possibly to be involved by entering the married state, even with Viola."

To such a pitch of indignation did this train of reasoning raise Villiers, that, as he pursued it, he saw not how closely one part of Paston's case bore upon his own; yet we must not only extenuate, but applaud the feeling that could lead him to execrate the miserable calculating policy of his rival. He was, however, neither so wanting to a sense of his own merits as to fear the undermining powers of this man, even with a treacherous agent within the garrison; nor was he—could he be so unjust to Viola, as to doubt her affection and truth, after the letter he had that morning received.

He was to be out at night, and hoped, from the size of the party, that it would necessarily include the Myddletons; and if so, he resolved to let no impediment check him in an arrangement of all existing differences with his ladylove. He trusted that his fortitude and constancy might not be put to the trial by a meeting with Miss Darwin; but if such did happen, he had made up his mind as to the line of conduct he should pursue. His object, then, in seeking out Ludlow was to explain the disappointment of meeting Viola, and the undisguised rivalry that Paston evinced in that quarter. Also to ask his advice as to how this latter, disagreeable as it was, should put an end to; and to relate the object of Thornhill's visit, almost hoping that Ludlow would, in reality, counsel him not to accept the commission.

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CHAPTER III.

"And I did never ask it you again;
But still cheered up the slow-waned heavy time;
Saying 'what lack you?'
Or, 'what good love may I perform for you?'"
SHAKSPEAUE.

LUDLOW heard with some surprise the account of Thornhill's communication, and advised our hero to accept without delay the proffered commission. For the rest he was, he said, prepared, by the dilatory humour in which he had that morning found him. He declared that nothing less than a denial could have been expected, whether Viola was really at home or not, since it was far too great a trial of patience for a person in her circumstances, the being doomed to wait for hours till it should be her suitor's

pleasure to vouchsafe a visit. He hoped, however, that when the time of meeting did come, he would adhere to the resolutions he had made.

Where the rout, party, or drum was held at which he trusted to find Viola, it is of no importance to state; but, at a certain hour, the new officer of the Life Guards rendered himself there.

It was not early, for a lady in the vicinity saw masks; which means that a number of foolish people, instead of proceeding directly to the greater temple of folly where they were to sacrifice, drove out of their way thither, to expose themselves to the shouts and derision of a mob, as they descended from, and returned to, their carriages once more than was necessary; paraded their well or ill-dressed forms before a female tyrant who ridiculed them on their departure; and having torn or deranged their attire, heard inapt remarks passed, not calculated to make happy ears polite, and thus, become thoroughly out of humour, found them-

selves once more on their way to that fane where the Eleusinian mysteries were to be performed, not quite so much in the vein for supporting their several characters as when, in the confidence of tricksiness, Harlequin had slipped on his dress of cheque and spangle, or Columbine betaken herself to the short drapery, which was to manifest to the world so liberal a display of a well-turned ankle.

Here were the gay Pilgrim, the noble Chimney-sweeper, the dull Clown, the hoydenish
Nun, the Hussar with pelisse and pouch-belt
on the wrong shoulder, the Sailor unconscious
of ocean, the King's page as ignorant of court,
the talkative Quakeress, the lively Turk, the
Jew with a brogue, the Oxford scholar without
learning—but that was not strange,—the sad
Mercutio, the sheepish Rochester, the welldressed Miser, the stupid Shakspeare, the fat
Cleopatra, the guileless Devil, the Cupid of
twelve stone, Hymen with a pipe, and Pan with
a torch,—cum multis aliis.

At this entrepôt the more facetious characters had got up a kind of interlude, by no means satisfactory to the others, as, before parting for the masquerade, Cupid found his wings broken, Pan had demolished Hymen's pipe, set the Chimney-sweeper on fire, and dragged the Devil's tail off,—the latter had stuck his horns into the Pilgrim in revenge, the Quakeress and the Nun fell over each other in a frolic, Cleopatra pulled the Miser about, the Jew had broken the Clown's head, the Turk was drunk, the Sailor sober, and the Hussar had lost a moustache.

As they made their exeunt, Villiers thought he could discover in Pan, Sir Thomas Brittlebank, and in the Page, Goldcrest,—a blank one of foolscap, as the former observed.

Pan had, indeed, committed various indiscretions, and was scarcely civil to the ladies. "What a frisky old man!" thought the hostess.

As he had hoped, rather than anticipated, Villiers found the Myddletons at the second party, where was no quaint mumming, but a brilliant assemblage of that mixture which, composed of opposites, so very seldom, save to the very young, yields the satisfaction coveted.

Viola, who was leaning on the arm of her last partner in the dance, perceived his entrance. Not at once did he approach her; but the thoughts of both were as closely riveted upon each other as, to the eye of an indifferent spectator, they must have appeared wrapped in unconsciousness. At length she saw him wind his way towards her, and trembled in the uncertainty of the effect produced by her letter. He advanced, and having secured her hand for the next cotillon, was again lost in the gay crowd. But the glance of his eye, and the whole expression of his face, as he spoke, had been sufficient. Once more by her side, her arm drawn within his, and they were quickly lost to all around. The sets had already formed; they were fortunate enough to be excluded, and retired as far as possible from the

quadrille table, where sat Mrs. Myddleton winning, and therefore almost as securely fixed as had the reverse been her fate.

It were ill to disturb two people under such interesting circumstances; neither would the recapitulation of their discourse reward a third person;-let us then leave unsaid here a conversation which, eloquent and burning as it must have been, would so infinitely lose by any attempt to reproduce: yet, at such a time, a look, a half-suppressed sigh, a half-uttered sentence, say that which volumes of studiously-composed matter would fail to convey. Let us then imagine that in that pressure of the hand, as they leave off speaking and mix with the rest, misunderstanding is acknowledged as cleared away; doubt has given place to renewed confidence; suspicion, and mutability, to reliance and love. Whatever encouragement Mrs. Myddleton might hold out to other suitors, Viola gave Villiers to believe that her heart was loyal to him, and would remain so. Little, therefore,

need he apprehend from titled rivals—least of all from Paston.

"Let me, then," said Charles, in their crowded security, "at once make the proposal to those who have our happiness in their power."

"As you will," said Viola; "but I fear we tempt our fate,—the time is not yet ripe."

"When will it, Viola, be riper?—I am resolved—be you firm!"

Villiers was confident of success. Whether he grounded this upon the recent acquisition of a red coat, as Thornhill suggested, we are not bound to say;—it is, however, no less certain, that on the following morning he did propose, and, as Viola expected, was not only dismissed with a refusal, but forbidden the house,—or in other words, most civilly and gratuitously informed, that if he presented himself at the door he would not gain admittance.

And now let me, having an heiress to my daughter, recommend all poor men to desist from the "bootless race" of fortune-hunting. Believe me, misguided people, it is time lost, youth thrown away, your own little modicum of money spent in a pursuit which yields no return but ridicule, and altogether a bad speculation. Shun also the attractions of the rich widow, with her jointure; think of your forlorn state when the life interest is lost, should she leave you in your widowhood. Keep wide of such; nor in avoiding Scylla, fall upon Charybdis—marry not a pretty simpleton, without a fraction.

In short, poor man, what shall become of you I know not, if your heart is bent on matrimony. I can think of no better solace than a commission in some cavalry regiment, where they sit late and drink deep. Here you shall laugh at broken hearts and rejected addresses; and in the pleasing society of the senior captains, or the exhaustless good humour of a convivial major, lose all remembrance of her who, to follow the advice of Milton, were "best quitted with disdain."

We have gone, however, a little too far in advance. It was on the morning of the inauspicious day which befel Villiers, as regarded his negotiation with the house of Myddleton, and following the evening on which that rash young man determined upon hurrying his fate, that a person called with a note.

Now, the new officer of the Life Guards, we have already seen, had a most orthodox horror of any document which did not upon its outward showing profess to come from, or at the least have been folded by, a lady. All such carried with them their recommendation to favour; though it must be confessed, more from the improbability of their touching upon the subject of pounds, shillings, and pence, than from any romantic devotion to the fairer sex; for it may be questioned, whether even a milliner's bill for ruffles would have met with much consideration. Villiers besides was at breakfast, and the note was tossed as usual on the sofa,

after a glance at its very masculine-looking

The person who brought it, being a business man, had a tolerable stock of patience; but a quarter of an hour passing away without any messenger to desire his attendance, he made bold to send in to the gentleman. "Show him up," said Villiers.

The Mercury in question, who was a dapper man, with a good humoured, self-satisfied face, something a corporation, and a stout though well-formed leg, made two scrapes with the latter, and wished Villiers a good day.

" It is a charming morning, sir."

"Humph," said Villiers in surprise, while the man searched in his pocket, and produced a book like that in which tailors stick their patterns, but which is also capable of containing their bills.

"Really, my good man, I have no money; and if you are sent here by Mr.—"

so the must be to take a bear of the sum out of

"So I thought, sir;—stay, that is not it, either.—So I thought, sir; but gentlemen are not always as well off as they should be—and it doesn't become me to make remarks or inquiries. Ah, this is the right book,—how will you have it, sir?"

"Upon my word I have not yet decided about my regimentals.—Do you come from Cobalt's?"

"By no means, sir; I come from Messrs. Hoeblade, Mattocks, and Co., the eminent wholesale ironmongers in Watling Street.—Ah, I was sure you must be familiar with that house, sir!"

Villiers professed his ignorance.

"Indeed, sir!—but the note will explain. Our friend, Mr. Ludlow—you will see, sir—I am to pay you seven hundred and fifty pounds: there are seven of one hundred,—will you have one fifty, sir, or the rest in small notes?"

Villiers started from his chair, and seized the letter he had so unceremoniously thrown aside; while the money-bearer counted the sum out on the table, in a way he thought most convenient to Villiers; and concluded by begging for a receipt,—"for," said he, "it is getting late, sir, and I have a deal of business on hand this morning"

"Stay, stay," said Villiers, as he hastily read his friend's short epistle. "Stay—this money really I hardly know what to do about it."

"If I may be so bold, sir—I cannot leave it without a receipt; it is quite out of the way of all business transactions."

"One moment," said Villiers, as he re-read the communication, and the confidential clerk of Messrs. Hoeblade, Mattocks, and Co. stood, with one hand ready to sweep the hundred pound notes off the table, with their smaller accompaniments, while his fat and rosy, but intelligent face was turned up towards Villiers at an angle of inquiry, which seemed to say, "Receipt, or no receipt?" Again he stepped back, as the newly-to-be equipped officer, in deciding to accept the use of Ludlow's money,

moved towards the inkstand, and wrote all that was required.

"We have some good sword-blades, sir, on hand-a large assortment. I think I heard you mention regimentals," observed the respectable clerk, looking to the interest of his house while Villiers wrote; "a large assortment, sir; only want mounting-we can send the blade to a cutler, and have it done to any pattern, sir." Villiers shook his head. "Or stirrup-irons? -spurs ?-pistols ?-that is to say, the barrels." Villiers held up one hand, to deprecate further application; - "or you may want to furnish your barrack-room, sir,-we have very good fireirons and fenders, canteens, conjurors-every thing in that line, sir-every thing. We supply our friend Mr. Ludlow, besides several estates in the West Indies."

Villiers replied, that should he want any thing of the kind he would certainly send to Watling Street. "It is so near!" said he, as the man bowed and withdrew. This was the second time a friendly epistle had been thrown carelessly by without the process of opening. He therefore resolved from that day, that in whatever shape bills or notes might henceforward be presented, they should not be treated with similar neglect. He had indeed received an extremely agreeable lesson upon the subject, which we must confess does not always happen.

And now, what was the most approved method for him to pursue? Should he feel himself degraded by accepting the money offered to his service in the kindest manner by Ludlow, who had indeed made a point of it, and the obligation to come from the other side? Should he, in short, refuse it, and borrow sums at an immense interest, or contract debts with tradespeople, which he could not pay, and thus, in point of fact, defraud them of their money? He decided at once to avail himself of Ludlow's kindness.

During the previous months of the season he

had been indulging in the society of Viola. He was now denied all access, and failed in various attempts that he made to see her, as Mrs. Myddleton avoided, if possible, going to parties where there was a probability of meeting him; or if such did befal, kept her daughter so close under her dragon-like protection, that the precious fruit was only to be approached by the eye. But Paston and the others no longer hovered in the train of Viola. The first was bent on a new project matrimonial, which would last about as long as the two former. New men, however, took their places, and still—it is the fate of an heiress—fluttered about her, and inflicted their undesired company.

The young officer immediately joined his regiment, and withdrew himself from scenes where the eyes of men, and more, the eyes of women, marked him out as a rejected suitor—whether by the lady or her parents none stayed to inquire.

Miss Darwin, no more thought of by Villiers, was deserted also by Paston: but shall we regret

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the latter defection? Yet to her we must not further let our thoughts revert, nor enlarge upon her various sources of grief, mortified as she was at the contemptuous and trifling conduct of her lover, who deigned not even to seek explanation of any part of her deportment that his fastidious eye had been displeased with. Shame and remorse for the want of loyalty she had shown to the master of her affections afar off must indeed have been the uppermost and bitterest feeling of her heart.

CHAPTER IV.

"If then true lovers have been ever crost,
It stands as an edict in destiny;
Then let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love as thoughts, and dreams, and sighs,
Wishes and tears, poor fancy's followers."

SHAKSPEARE.

THE course of our tale proceeds a year, during which there had been no communication between Viola and Villiers. An unwearied, and to outward observers, an undivided attention to his professional duties soon amply qualified the latter to take his tour of duty—a boon that could not be denied to one who had in a very short time shown himself more competent to fill the station of Sub-Brigadier of Horse than others, who, having been longer with the corps, held a relatively

higher rank; neither was it then incumbent on a young cavalry officer to undergo his year of probation before he entered upon more gratifying duties than that of riding serra-file on a fieldday, condemned to receive the numerous pebbly and muddy favours of those who precede him at a gallop "in the ranks of death." If we may believe that the Duke of Argyle, in his speech upon the state of the army at this time, was not open to the accusation of hyperbole or embellishment, the cavalry discipline, except in some particular regiments, was somewhat of the least creditable to those who had the direction of these matters. We, as identifying ourselves with the corps of Villiers, were indeed rather indignant at one or two occasions which he has taken to sneer at Hyde Park :- but away !- for Villiers to undertake was to excel; - perfect in the small sword. this accomplishment had only to become a little spoiled by the necessary introduction of the cavalry cuts, and for equitation, here he was unsurpassed; a clear head, a correct eye, and a

careful study of the grammar of tactics did the rest,

Yet with all this he was indifferent to his profession. He hated the confinement it involved, however little, and however convenient at the time: the pride of dress too, so natural in a young man, he had lost much of the relish for; and although his heart stirred at the trumpet's sound, he placed no value on the panoply and extrinsic glitter of military étalage. He pined for command himself; he hated to live subservient to others; and he felt that, until a high rank should be attained, the service he had entered into would afford him not the slightest gratification. This he might live to be undeceived in, and already, indeed, was he conscious of the social pleasures nowhere more truly understood than amongst men of the sword.

Another season had frittered itself to an end. The Myddletons, for a few weeks, had joined the crowd of its pleasure-seeking votaries, so to style the twice two thousand, noble and gentle, who are said "to look down upon the universe with pity"—how truly, we may doubt, as few think of any but themselves. Without quibble, however, here were the Myddletons about to leave town, having failed even once to encounter our officer, who, with the most heroic pride, and a philosophy worthy of Plato, kept himself close at Windsor with his corps. For some most important reason, however, as we may suppose, he suddenly determined to run up to town.

At this period Handel was presiding at the direction of concerts and operas, which proved great sources of attraction to the fanatici of the day, and the enrapturing music of Veracini and Geminiani only gave way to the astounding powers of Handel's genius. From whatever cause, probably a want of funds, or the equally usual circumstance, a disagreement amongst the Italian performers, the Opera House, not the present one, though in the Haymarket, happened to be closed for some length of time, and the

spectacle was presented at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The Myddletons were, it appeared, to make this the last of their gay doings.

Although this was some few years after the celebrated Faustina and Cuzzoni feud—the noble patronesses of which should have found some more dignified means of amusement*—Cuzzoni, having no longer the apprehension of her fair enemy's appearance in England, had returned, and was now enchanting her audiences with strains even more mellow and delicious than those of her younger days.

Mrs. Myddleton, who knew every thing, was aware that Villiers remained at Windsor, although, in point of fact, he happened to be

^{*}A rivalry between these singers was taken part in by several ladies of rank. To end this disagreeable state of faction the directors offered a guinea a year more to Faustina than her rival. Lady Pembroke and others, friends of Cuzzoni, hearing this, made her swear upon the Evangelists never to take less than Faustina; and the directors, continuing firm, Cuzzoni found herself ensnared by her oath into the necessity of quitting the kingdom.—Sir J. Hawkins.

quietly staying at his lodgings in the metropolis. Her belief was grounded on the information of an officer of the regiment, who had called in Grosvenor Square that morning. There was then no meeting to be apprehended between the young people, and she should withdraw her daughter from town, if no peeress elect, at least uncontaminated by the detested influence of one she so much feared.

Villiers, on that day, dined with a party of friends, amongst whom was Lord Arthur Finchley. There was also the very officer just mentioned, Mr. Whichcote, who, having himself left Windsor before Villiers, was of course ignorant of his being in town: they knew, in fact, little of each other as yet, for he had lately exchanged into the corps; and, although our hero sat between these two gentlemen at dinner, his conversation was chiefly directed to Lord Arthur, who had been one of his earliest friends when he first flashed meteor-like upon the great world. Latterly there had been little com-

munication between them, for Villiers was not quite in trim for indulging in the morning society of men of Finchley's clique. Still there was, when they met, much of the old feeling exhibited. Lord Arthur was, however, a notoriously selfish man, and altogether not a person to the stability of whose friendship it would be quite judicious to trust.

It was much the custom at this period for officers to wear their regimentals at all seasons, whether away from their corps or not, or even on half-pay. The usage was, however, scarcely imperious, and many men of better taste adopted whatever dress they pleased, except at large parties and on particular occasions. Whichcote was now in the evening costume dress of the Life Guards, without the cuirass*, of course, and the heavy cavalry sword replaced by a dress one. Lord Arthur and Villiers, with the others, were clad in the rich, but quaint, and

Then still in use.

to us extraordinary, habiliments then worn. Except that Finchley displayed a wig, the description of one will suffice for both the friends. The hair of Villiers was long, and of a rich brown, hanging in curls almost to the extremely low collar of his deep peach-coloured velvet coat, which was laced with gold and lined with white silk, and being cut away after a new fashion, shewed a magnificently embroidered waistcoat, with immense flaps and pockets; the cuffs of the coat, large and loose, reached but half way down the cambric sleeve of his under garment, which displayed ruffles of curiously fine lace. His nether man-I believe this the approved expression,-was clothed in murreycoloured velvet, reaching, by no means, so low as the knee, and to meet this the white silk stocking was continued far up the leg, a dress that was admirably calculated to show to advantage a graceful and well-turned limb. The sword hilt, of curious workmanship, inlaid with gold, the tasselled cane, and three-cornered hat with its cockade and point lace, completed the attire.

As the intention of the party was to appear at the Opera, always a dress affair, there was little difference in the costume of the remainder, except as to colour. Their host, a bon vivant, kept them long over their wine, which, as they broke up, shewed its potent effects upon several of the guests in different degrees. Villiers was not a slave to this vice, as we have before seen: there was, however, no saying what a happy mess-table, on a winter's evening, might do for him in process of time. He had avoided the bottle,-not so Whichcote, who, a good deal elevated, saved those near him the trouble, or deprived them of the pleasure, of talking. Lord Arthur had just drunk enough to make him an agreeable companion to a man who did not wish for the privilege of a reply; and this certainly was the case with his companion, for his thoughts were directed to the hope of a meeting with Viola, whom Whichcote, quite unconscious of the degree of interest he was awakening, had informed him of his having seen, as well as her idea of being at the very place they were bent upon visiting.

When a person is anxious, though unable, to get away from a sederunt, he is said to be sitting on thorns. This is not a most agreeable seat, we may indeed think, and as it was one which Villiers had for some time occupied, we cannot wonder at his being desirous of leaving it. Glad indeed, therefore, was he when etiquette permitted him to move. The theatre was so extremely full when he reached Lincoln's Inn Fields, that there was no possibility of getting into the body of the house-at least to see or hear; but however provoking this was, he reflected that the crowd on coming out would, of necessity, be slow in its movement, and an opportunity, he hoped, be thus presented of getting within ear-shot of Viola-if the truth must be told-to get a last speech of, or failing

this, a last sight of whom, had been the chief object in his coming up to town, which he knew she must soon leave. What, particularly, he wished to communicate, has never been clearly demonstrated; but his reasons for all he did were probably both as cogent and wise as those of most other young men of his age who have been caught in the snares of Cupid. His two dinner companions he found rather difficult to get away from. He determined, then, to tell Finchley the true position of affairs, and begging him to remain till the sortie commenced, only requested that he would then give him an opportunity to talk with Viola if he could possibly get near her. A little mystery, with a grimace or two, was enough for Whichcote, who, perhaps having affairs of his own to attend to, at length took his departure, extremely flushed with the Gallic grape.

At the conclusion of the opera, Finchley, leaning on the arm of Villiers in the lobby, was talking with a friend, to whom he now introduced his companion, and while mutual courtesies were in the course of performance, the Myddletons passed. The moment was lost,it was too late to repair the fault,-the crowd was apparently impenetrable. Villiers saw it at a glance, and became nearly frantic. The new introduction had drawn off, while Finchley begged a thousand pardons, and wished his friend, just parted from, at the devil. This was of little service, however,-action, action was the word; and they elbowed their way through the throng, much to the detriment of wigs, ribs, and ladies' dresses, deaf to all remonstrance, masculine or feminine. No Myddletons were as yet to be seen. They descended, and although separated by the more boisterous crowd below, the companions managed to keep sight of each other. They were forced by the moving mass towards the outer door, and it must be remembered that they had to contend with a Lincoln's Inn Fields crush, not a Haymarket one, though this latter is not always either extremely considerate or polite. Here, with the confusion of chairs, the calling and coming up of carriages, the flashing of flambeaux, and the pitchy darkness beyond, was a scene that, to a person new in London, would have seemed fraught with horror. With the ill-regulated police of that time, it was attended with much more real danger than at present, though even now we wonder at the nerve ladies display in passing through, or standing exposed to such tumult.

Villiers pushing, and pushed on by those in the rear, found himself within a few yards of the party he sought, just as Mr. Myddleton left his wife and daughter, and went, lighted by a link-boy, in search of their carriage, which he passed without knowing. The footman, who had got it up, was now sent to bring back his master; and while Mrs. Myddleton withdrew her arm from Viola to wrap her mantle closer round, the mother and daughter were separated by two or three men, who pushed rudely between: of these, one snatched a diamond cross that hung from the neck of the former, while another reeled purposely against Viola, and she was borne off amidst the dense mass into the darkness without. At this moment the carriage was obliged to drive on, and Mrs. Myddleton stood alone upon the steps, pushed on all sides, and screaming for her child.

Villiers bore down all opposition as he dashed by her; and seizing the man by the neck who had hustled Viola, hurled him to the earth. He leaped over his grovelling body, and passed on; yet, although it was but for a moment, he had lost all trace of her whom he sought.

Getting now more clear of the mob, he wandered on through the drizzling rain, which made the pavement slippery and dangerous for a foot passenger, as the various carriages cut in round him. Could Viola have gone through all this peril unharmed? He walked quickly down Portugal Street, and stopped to listen. Here all was comparatively still. A solitary passen-

ger, paddling through the wet, passed him occasionally, but nothing that gave evidence of her. The carriages and lights were fast disappearing from before the theatre. To return, and demand whether she were found, would be waste of time; but this, instead of continuing the search, is what many do, and thereby lose the remote chance there might have been of retrieving the desired object. He retraced his steps with rapidity, as a new idea struck him, and ran to the other end of the street. He had been induced to take the former course, by seeing a dress before him which he imagined was that of Viola; and quickly discovering his mistake, he had passed the woman and gone on. Now, he thought, could she not have turned the same way as the carriages had taken, and still be amongst a crowd? There was hope, and yet dread, in the surmise. He flew; as he turned the corner of the street, he perceived a cluster of coaches unable to proceed, except at a slow pace; some indeed choking the way altogether, mixed

with chairs, and surrounded by a mob of idle people, mostly, in all likelihood, seeking to take advantage of whatever accident might chance. He passed through these, on and on, along the narrow pavement, jostled and cursed; but this he cared not for. There was now a complete stoppage, yet no impediment seemed in the way of the foremost vehicle, which was a cumbrous hackney-coach. It had, however, pulled up; and as Villiers got abreast, he could not be mistaken in the voice which proceeded from the open window, calling to the coachman in loud tones of expostulation and intreaty to be let out. The man remained hesitating on the box; but Villiers pushed aside two or three people, who were amongst the inactive spectators of the scene, and gave the required assistance himself. Viola was on the opposite side; but next him sat a person whose boisterous laugh he could easily distinguish for Whichcote's, now more inebriated than before. He tried to hold Viola down; and, changing his tone, demanded, firmly, "who dared to open the door?" Villiers made no reply; but exerting all the strength he was capable of, dragged him out of the coach. A struggle, and a blow, and he was down; his more sober and active antagonist leaped in, and called loudly to the coachman to drive on. "Where?"—"Any where,—Grosvenor Square." A loud laugh from the mob around succeeded shouts for a ring and fair play. "Drive, drive!" said Villiers, "faster, faster,—you shall be well paid."

The flashing of a light from a shop window had given Whichcote one glimpse of his antagonist's face. He now rose, and attempted to pursue; but it was not easy to make his way through that dense knot of vagabonds which the least symptom of disturbance so quickly draws together in London, like a swarm of wasps, each eager to lend his stings of malicious aggravation wherever it may be most likely to produce violent measures between the parties, already but too well disposed for the assault.

Yet, let us do them justice. A London mob professes to lean towards the oppressed, and this is going half way to prevent oppression. Even a swell, as he is called, may depend upon "fair play," which, in any place out of England, he will vainly look for.

Whichcote was speedily taken in charge by the watch, though more to afford protection and obtain money than with any idea of incarcerating him; and, having got half-a-guinea to drink, the faithful guardians of the night consigned him to a coach, in which he reached his lodgings, breathing vengeance and hate towards Villiers, whom he was determined to visit with a heavy retribution on the morrow.

Oh, that morrow!

What were the subjects of conversation that Villiers lighted on in the drive home we have no opportunity of knowing. The vehicle called a coach jolted and creaked towards its destination; and not a little astonished was the Jehu to find Grosvenor Square in reality the

place desired, to which he now conducted his

It would appear that Viola, on being separated from her mother, had been seen by their coachman, the carriage having just come up. He called to her, and she made towards it. A link-boy opened the door, but the intervening crowd forced her slowly and unconsciously to the left, where was another coach, into which she stepped, mistaking the person inside for her father, who had the instant before left them. The link-boy at their own again closed the door, and the coachman drove on by order of the constables, but supposed his young mistress to be inside; for he was obliged to attend to his horses, and could not see whether she had entered or not.

In the meantime Viola had discovered her mistake. But little acquainted with her voice at any time, now that it was excited by agitation and fear, Whichcote, inebriated to a degree of obstinacy, cunning, and stupidity, if these may

go together, would scarcely have known her from "the good Queen Caroline," had she been still alive; and would almost as soon have looked for her Majesty's entering a hackney-coach at that hour as Miss Myddleton.

Neither was Viola aware who might be her persecutor; for, as all-revealing gas was to the million an occult principle, the darkness into which they immediately drove from the more luminous vicinity of the theatre, and the thickness of his speech, contributed to render the slight knowledge she already had of his person totally unavailing.

Whichcote was, then, curiously interested in the adventure, and proportionably irritated at its sudden conclusion. He was still, however, totally ignorant of Viola's identity.

Let it not be thought that this officer was an habitually vicious character. On the contrary, there were few men really possessed of a more liberal or generous spirit.

CHAPTER V.

"While choler works, good friend, you may be wrong;
Distrust yourself, and sleep before you fight.
"Tis not too late to-morrow to be brave;
If honour bids, to-morrow kill or die.

But if your wrathful blood is apt to boil, Or are your nerves too irritably strung, Keep Lent for ever, and forswear the bowl."

ARMSTRONG.

WITH one in so high a state of excitement as was Whichcote, it scarcely suited to delay till morning the deeds of dire import by which the stain of dishonour was to be washed away. But if he had failed to observe the latter part of the above advice, nor forsworn the bowl, he was at least constrained to sleep before he fought; for, while in the act of loading his second pistol, into

which he put the ball before the powder, his head dropped on the table where he was seated, and his senses became quickly "steeped in forgetfulness." The explosion of the first, which, having been duly loaded, cocked, and deposited with an accidental nicety of balance near the table edge, fell to the floor, with a shock of so weighty a part of his person, brought the frightened inmates of the house around; and for the first few minutes it was imagined that the unfortunate gentleman had committed suicide. Wound, however, found they none; they turned his head over and over-he was unscathed,-the ball had lodged harmless in the opposite wainscot; but the report—the laughter, nearly as loud, which followed the discovery of his true situation-or the lifting him, a heavy and helpless load, upon the bed-all were insufficient to break the dead sleep into which he had fallen.

Whichcote was, however, one of those peculiarly constituted persons, who, reaping all advantages from a very hard head, are perfectly themselves when a few hours' repose has helped to dissipate the fumes of the previous night's excess. The imperfect recollection of a dream of battle, the thunder of artillery, a charge, and a fall from his horse, was all that remained to him of past events, save those which preceded the state of non-existence into which he had lapsed. Indeed, his memory can scarcely be said to have faithfully served him, with regard to the adventure in which Viola bore a part, the identity of whom was of course still unsuspected. The blow of Villiers could not, however, be forgotten; that had stamped itself on his mind with undying vividness. The confusion of pistols, powder-flask, bullet-moulds, &c., having been cleared from off the table by his servant before he awoke, he discovered nothing to remind him of the ridiculous part he had since played; and, as will be seen, his plans had undergone a complete change with regard to the arms and munitions of war.

In the mean time Villiers thought lightly of vol. II.

the affair. His memory loved to rest upon the meeting with his mistress—the promise he had exacted, that she would still be true to him, whatever might befal, and the pledge of faith which he had stolen from her lips at parting.

At the hour of nine, as he still lay revelling in the recollection of these, while a thousand crude plans of perspective happiness suggested themselves to his imagination—ideal and fairy visions of which, it might be but a few hours would show the vanity—he was informed that an officer waited in the next room, who begged to have the honour of seeing him, on business of importance. A card gave his designation as "Major Gayton, of the King's Dragoons."

"A remarkably agreeable person, I will venture to believe," said Villiers to himself; "and somewhat an early riser!—Get breakfast," continued he aloud; "and say that I desire the honour of his company. I will attend him forthwith."

A hasty toilette, and they were in each other's

presence. Bows and ceremonies were exchanged, and a chair placed for the stranger at the table, which he declined to fill. An extremely polite, quiet-looking, and gentleman-like man, some twenty years senior to Villiers; Major Gayton, with the reputation of having fought five duels upon the gold wire of punctilio drawn to its finest thread, was the man of all others most sought after by the younger officers of the army, who were so fortunate as to write themselves his friends, when an affair of honour was disagreeable enough to present itself. Seldom, however, did he condescend to act; and but that Whiehcote had served in the same regiment, out of which he had lately exchanged, it is probable that some other and less accomplished friend might have taken his message on the present occasion.

He had already extricated him from one difficulty of the kind into which he had blundered, and there seemed now no reason why he should refuse to attempt the like good office; but this was an affair which the Major opined could scarcely come off without bloodshed.

He seated himself away from the breakfasttable, apologizing for so untimely an intrusion; and declared that he could not open his commission till Villiers commenced his meal, to which our hero required no second bidding.

"I anticipate the communication you are about to make," said he, smiling; "but I agree with you, that these things are not the better discussed fasting. I am tempted to believe that it is as a friend of Mr. Whichcote, I have the honour of seeing you."

The Major bowed.

"I regret," said he, "that my first personal interview with a gentleman of Mr. Villiers' reputation in society, should be on so unpleasant an occasion; yet, belonging to the same branch of his Majesty's service, I feel the less sensibly, perhaps, the extreme delicacy of interfering between two officers of another regiment."

Villiers bowed, rather impatiently.

"What,—and Whichcote is annoyed at last night's business?" said he.

"Annoyed!" returned the Major,—" you will admit that he has had occasion?"

"Certainly, certainly. I am not surprised, indeed I regret having struck him; but—"

"You give me great pleasure in saying so," interrupted Major Gayton; "since I trust that a very ample apology before all the officers of the regiment—or at most—"

"Stop," said Villiers, "you mistake me; I am as far from intending any public apology, as I depend upon the good faith of a gentleman possessing the well-known honour of Major Gayton," who bowed gravely to the compliment—
"that no inadvertent expression may be misconstrued."

"Sir, I must on my part remind you," said the Major, "that we are upon an affair in which the choice of language is particularly requisite. A word misplaced, an expression which conveys an indirect meaning, or even the peculiar rounding of a period, have in such cases been attended with unpleasant results."

"Major Gayton, I beg you not to mistake me. Plain English, and common sense, are all I aim at; and be assured that I can intend nothing which may give umbrage to yourself, or additional cause for dissatisfaction to your friend. I was, however, about to remark that, although I am sorry for the blow, it is merely in confidence to you that I say this. No public apology will I make, as any explanation must involve the publishing also a lady's name, of which I believe Mr. Whichcote to be ignorant, and of which, likewise, for any act or word of mine, I am determined he and the world shall remain so."

"I was not aware there was a lady in the case," replied the Major; for Whichcote had something imperfectly related the cause of the quarrel. "That, indeed, alters the face of affairs," pursued he: "I agree with you, that under no circumstances can we inquire further

into so delicate a transaction; that is, if she is really one whose reputation—"

"There I must beg you to stop," said Villiers, holding up his hand.

The Major again bowed, expressed his regret, and taking from his pocket a long and narrow slip of paper, placed it on the table.

"This, I fear, is the only alternative," said he. "But I would prefer treating with your friend on such an occasion."

"I have had so few of these latterly," said Villiers, with a forced smile, "that I am fain to transact all my own affairs: however, I must look for one. Swords, I perceive! Yet the choice of weapons lies with me."

"True," replied the Major; "but my friend is well aware of your address, and desires that, for his own reputation, he may be allowed such."

"Swords be it then!" said Villiers: "it may be better," thought he, "for I will only prick him. Time?" he demanded, aloud. "Shortly before sun-set, so that it may go down as our preliminaries are settled: we shall, besides, be less liable to disturbance."

"Agreed. Place?"

"Hyde Park." And the Major described a retired spot, one of the fashionable Aceldamas of the period.

"I will not disappoint him," said Villiers; and the Officer of Horse took his leave.

"A lady!" thought he, with a sneer, as he walked towards Whichcote's lodgings. "The usual cause, however. It is a pity, too, that a couple of fine young men should put their lives in peril about a worthless woman. Reputation! The reputation of old Drury—ha, ha!" For Whichcote had informed him of having been at a theatre on the previous night, but without specifying which; and the Major by no means relied too surely upon Villiers' attempt to establish the fame of the fair cause of quarrel. "Well might the Caliph of Bagdad demand,

who is she? when the man was brought before him accused of murder. Rightly did the second Solomon and truly wise divine that a woman must have been at the bottom of the mischief!" concluded he, knocking at the door.

But we must return to Villiers, who, as soon as he had got rid of the punctilious Major, wrote a note to inquire after the health of Miss Myddleton. In his way, the servant was to deliver one for Lord Arthur Finchley, and call for the answer on his return. It is needless to say this was a request that the young nobleman would stand his friend in the approaching duel.

Eagerly did Villiers await the messenger's return, not for Finchley's reply—that he was certain of,—but in the anxious hope that his peace was made in Grosvenor Square, and that the service he had rendered Viola would lead to his kind reception by her mother.

The answers to his notes arrived. The lord's was tossed aside; the lady's opened with san-

guine expectations of anticipated delight. It

"Miss Myddleton presents her compliments to Mr. Villiers, and begs to return thanks for his obliging inquiries. She is desired by her mother to express her acknowledgments for the protection afforded Miss Myddleton yesterday evening, and her hope that, as Mr. Villiers does not mention it, he has caught no cold.

"Mrs. and Miss Myddleton hope Mr. Villiers will have a pleasant journey to Windsor.

" Grosvenor Square, Wednesday."

"Bon voyage indeed!" said he, tearing the note in bits, and flinging it from him. "After all, man is the only human being to be depended on!"

He took up Finchley's.

"My dear Sir," wrote his friend,

"I am really sorry that business of an important nature prevents my attending you in the little affair you mention, which it would otherwise have given me much pleasure to do.

I hope, however, to hear of its being amicably settled; and am,

"My dear Sir,

"Yours faithfully,

"ARTHUR FINCHLEY."

The curl of Villiers' lip was not of long duration. He broke into a loud and bitter laugh.

"Faith, Hope, and Charity! You have all the Christian virtues, my lord!" exclaimed he. "Business before pleasure, too. You do not lose sight of the old adage. Well, I am gaining experience daily!"

He now determined to sally forth and press into his service the first man he met, however slight should be their acquaintance. If the regiment was in town, the thing would be easy; but that not being the case, he began to call over the roll of his friends, so styled.

"Ludlow," thought he, "would be a good mediator; yet, however agreeable such intervention, honour forbids me to make use of it!

Belasyse too, the first at a feast, certainly, but a bad second in a duel. Goldcrest might supply a funeral oration, the pen rather than the sword being his peculiar weapon—not that he wields the former too well; but I am afraid he must confine himself to paper wars. Thornhill were the best man to apply to, for he would speedily place both of us in arrest! What a pity that he is out of town!"

The sun had attained its extreme height as he left the house, and strolled down St. James's Street: at its setting he would be about, perhaps, to take the life of a fellow-creature, or, by some accident, to lose his own; for chance will often overcome skill. But these were disagreeable anticipations, and such as a man, situated as he was, should not allow the mind to dwell upon. Villiers accordingly cast them from him.

"You up here, Bohun! Why, who have you left at Windsor?" said he in surprise, ad-

dressing a young officer of the Life Guards: "Tolerably dusty, I think. Have you been riding for your life?"

"Not exactly. I rode with the escort,"

"Is the King come to town, then?"

"Yes. He is going to Germany in a short time, but holds a Levee and Drawing-room first."

"The former being—?"

"To-day. Why, you seem to know nothing of what is going on."

"And the latter?"

"I believe not till next week. I might have been relieved at Hounslow, but mounted Darnley's horse, and came on to town, as I had business of importance.

"Ha, ha! Why the whole world seems to have suddenly become notable: and what is it, may I ask, that should have induced you to ride a dozen extra miles?"

"Oh, I cannot stop; really you must not detain me."

"You shall not go till I have got your secret

from you. I know pretty well how important must be your business!"

"It is the Colonel's,"

"Oh, and you are his Aide-de-Camp!"

"It is a message to his daughter: there, let me go, do."

"Ha, ha, ha! If I did not think so! Well, and so you are going to a girl's school with a message,—I hope they'll mob you. But if I was the Colonel, I should not send such a good-looking fellow to my daughter of fifteen!"

Bohun blushed to the eyes.

"When do you return to Windsor?" continued Villiers.

"Perhaps to-morrow; but I shall hear today whether the Blues are to relieve us as was reported, in which case I remain. I have got the Colonel's leave."

"I dare say you have, and his daughter's. But do you mean we are coming to London?"

"Yes, and march the day after to-morrow."

"Bravo! Stop, stop, do not be in such a

hurry, I have 'business of importance' also, and you must take a share in it, moreover."

"What is it?" impatiently demanded Bohun, not very desirous of knowing, at the same time; and but little relishing the tone of superiority and ridicule with which Villiers addressed him: but this latter, like the less easily to be resisted tempter in a well-known tale,

"Gently, but palpably, confirmed the grasp."

Nor could the young officer, without violence, release himself. He yielded.

"Pray let go my button," said he, laughing: here is Lord Chesterfield walking up. Think what he would say should he see me, knife in hand, about to cut the tie which binds us to each other!"

Villiers took his arm, and, turning him from the direction he wished to pursue, explained the circumstances he was himself placed in, ending by a request that he would attend him to the field. Bohun looked embarrassed.

"I know you are thinking of what mamma would say; but come, decide, and I will make a man of you," said Villiers, in the same jeering tone he had commenced with.

"If I am to expect this kind and flattering mode of address always," said the other, exceedingly nettled, "I shall most certainly decline. You seem to forget that we are no longer at Eton,"

"Well, dear Bohun," said Villiers, quickly, with some remorse at the implied want of kindness, "I built upon our old friendship. You must forgive me, I will not offend again."

Bohun gave him his hand, which the other pressed with fervour.

"May I expect your services? tell me, for it is drawing near the eleventh hour," said Villiers.

"My dear fellow, it is nearer one!" exclaimed his friend, taking him literally.

"Well, well: you are so unsophisticated-

Oh, you understand now! Just arrived! You will be with me, then, as soon as you have despatched this weighty affair?"

Bohun nodded assent, and left him.

"A pretty scrape I should be in," thought Villiers, somewhat illiberally it must be confessed, "if this was a matter of difficulty, with such a girl as Bohun to take care of me: as it is, I must trust to the Major to see all right."

If the most perfect boyish beauty, making him look younger than he really was, a face, indeed, of which there are few women who might not be vain, the bluest eyes, the most luxuriant hair, and a complexion like a blush rose, which became instantaneously deeper at the least allusion to his looks, and much effeminacy of manner, could justify the soliloquy of Villiers, he was not far wrong in his estimation of the youthful cornet; but Bohun possessed a clear head and a good heart, with sufficient courage, although yet untried, to carry him well through his profession. Experience could not be ex-

pected, nor any great joy at the unlooked-for way in which he was to spend his afternoon. Neither may we esteem our young friend the less for thus entering upon the office of second in a duel with some reluctance. But he displayed none of this before Villiers, from whom he received some letters and papers written in case of accident, and attended him to the ground.

Whichcote and his friend were already there. The sun was setting with great splendour. The seconds had their instructions, and no time was lost in preparing for a combat that was to decide which of the parties, if either, would see it rise again. Once on the ground no apology could be made, had there been the inclination; but there was none. Villiers was known to be an excellent swordsman; Whichcote's reputation might be less brilliant; but he had no mean opinion of his own skill, and thought, if he should be successful in this encounter, it would constitute the finest feather in his cap.

The Major impatiently watched the sun set.

The last ray at length disappeared, and nothing but the calm twilight of a July day remained: no beam to dazzle, no heat to oppress,—all was cool, silent, and, save the presence of the combatants, solitary. It was a woody retired spot that they had chosen, with merely one wide opening to the west.

Their coats were thrown off, their swords drawn, and the weapons crossed. For a few seconds they stood with point and eye opposed, in attitude well calculated to display the most perfect symmetry. At length Villiers made a thrust, which was ably parried, and their swords passed and flashed with amazing rapidity.

Villiers sprang back, and dropped his point.

The Major waved his sword, and both seconds advanced: Whichcote, however, still stood on the defensive, and Villiers again placed himself in position. The seconds retired.

Another brilliant encounter, and Villiers sprang back as before.

Each took breath. Again they advanced to

the mortal struggle, and the sword of Whichcote took its flight for some yards along the
ground, where it at length stuck, vibrating,
while its owner crossed his arms, and awaited
the coup de grace. Villiers, however, manifested no inclination to take advantage of his
defenceless state, and retired apace. The seconds
flew towards them.

"Give him his sword," exclaimed Villiers:
"twice before, I might have run you through,
sir; but I am ready still to fight on if you
desire it."

Whichcote seemed undetermined. The Major was not satisfied either. There had been no blood spilt.

"Au premier sang, au premier sang! let it be," said he.

Villiers stamped with passion at the unfairness of this demand, yet spoke not, and again placed himself before his adversary; but Bohun interposed, and declared that his principal had already made sufficient amend, and that he would not permit any further encounter to take

"Psha!" said Major Gayton, with infinite contempt, and waxing warm: "You do not understand these things, sir. A boy like you ought to learn his duty before he presumes to dictate to a person of my experience."

"Boy or not, sir," replied Bohun, with great spirit, "I have sufficient knowledge of these affairs to prevent my suffering my principal to proceed further in this one; and, let me add, that if you urge it, and any thing fatal ensues, you will be a murderer."

"That admits of no reply!" said the Major, abruptly. "As soon as this matter is discussed, sir, you shall render me satisfaction."

"Never," said Villiers, "while I live!"

"No, no; this shall go no further!" cried Whichcote, throwing his sword away, which he had received from his second. "Villiers, here is my hand." It was frankly taken by him. "Assist me here," said he.

Bohun's sword was out. "I am ready, sir," he said to the Major; but Villiers pushed him forcibly aside.

"It is my quarrel," he exclaimed: "I will not see you killed for being my friend."

Whichcote tried to propitiate the Major.

"I have no quarrel with you, sir," said he to Villiers.

"But I have with you," replied the other; "and will not allow an undue advantage to be taken of a boy. Guard yourself, sir!"

The Major required no second invitation, and they were quickly at thrust and parry. Bohun, now highly excited, would have interposed, but Whichcote held him back with all his strength. "You will make matters worse, and perhaps get your friend killed," said he. "See! It is all over!"

Villiers had run the Major through the sword arm, which accordingly dropped. They drew off,—the seconds ran to their assistance.

"Are you satisfied?" demanded our hero.

"With you, sir, perfectly, for, as I have told you, we had no quarrel; but, for this young gentleman, I shall reserve a future day."

Bohun expressed his readiness.

"He shall not want a friend," said Villiers, wiping his sword, and returning it to the scabbard, while Whichcote bound up his second's bleeding arm.

These events passed in rapid succession. It was, however, getting dusk as the parties left the ground, Villiers and the Major bowing to each other with infinite ceremony.

"That straight-laced old tiger will have you out, Bohun, as sure as possible," said his friend, as they walked homewards. "He feasts upon cold steel. I can see nothing for it but my finishing him off-hand for you first."

"I do not fear him," replied Bohun.

"Doubtless you are very brave! Ha, ha! But I must put you in training. How are you at the foils?"

"Not very great. I learned from Lavolta,

but I did not finish with him: he used to put my wrist out, and was too violent."

"Ah! and the foil hardens your hand, and makes it shake; and the whole thing heats you to such a degree that you are unfitted for a morning visit afterwards to Caroline? But now, joking apart, I can tell you the Major is not to be trifled with, for he is as steady and as cool a hand as I ever had to deal with. Take my advice, therefore, and fence with me for an hour every morning, and we will see if we cannot work him to an oil."

"I do not wish to kill him."

"Kill him! no, to be sure you do not; but self-preservation is the first law of nature, and you must prevent his killing you, which he will do without the least remorse, to prove that he is not a murderer, as you called him!"

They parted.

Whichcote was a man not celebrated for diseretion. In his hands a story never lost; but if, on the following morning, he blazoned forth engaged in, he at least did justice to the generosity and high bearing of Villiers; not only as regarded himself, but in his taking, in so gallant a way, the part of his friend. It was soon, therefore, known all over the town, and, passing from the clubs to the newspapers, appeared in that which lay upon the Myddletons' breakfasttable the second morning after the duel.

"An affair of Honour," of course, it stated, had taken place between Mr. V—— and Mr. W——, both of the Life Guards; and, after giving somewhat a strained version of the Major's part in the transaction, and his wound, assigned "A Lady" as the cause.

If Viola's feelings were severely tried in submitting to write so frigid a note of thanks to Villiers, while her heart knew so opposite a feeling, this gentle heart had well nigh burst when the above paragraph met her eye. She could not doubt that she was the unhappy personage mentioned in a manner so revolting

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to a woman of delicacy. She could not hesitate to believe that Whichcote was the officer who had, on the previous evening, persecuted her; but she was as yet doomed to feed her sorrow in silence, and surrendered herself the prey to grief, unattempted by others to be soothed.

On the part of Villiers it was a source rather of pride and satisfaction-a sweet vengeance for fancied wrongs, that he should have fought for a woman who, unknowing of his danger, had evinced that coldness and ingratitude which the note in question gave him to believe she felt, if negative qualities can indeed be termed feelings. He would not admit the most palpable conclusion, that she had been in every word dictated to and controlled by her mother; but revelling in the idea of unrequited affection, and unappreciated services, and forgetful of all that had previously passed, he hastily consigned for the time both mother and daughter to that indignant place in his breast which one of them certainly had no right to occupy.

There is a pleasure in the knowledge, that if we are wronged it is undeservedly; there is a secret satisfaction in the certainty that evil has been returned for our good; and as this really is, under such circumstances, the only, and a very small comfort, it would be hard indeed to deny such consolation.

The Life Guards were, on the day expected, replaced at Windsor by the Blues; the former taking up their quarters in London.

Nothing thrown out by late events from his usual morning's research into the mysteries of his profession, Villiers now occupied himself with a new system of drill, soon to be put in force, the theory of which he resolved to be conversant with before he was obliged to display its practice in the field.

With his feet upon the table, his chair justly balanced, one hand holding a book, and the other pinching the nose of a bull-dog, he was apparently immersed in the setting of a squadron; while his friend gracefully reclined upon

a sofa. A brocade dressing-gown of green and gold enveloped the fragile form of Bohun, from beneath the folds of which peeped out a delicate foot, thrust into a curiously embroidered slipper; his flowing locks were conscious of a jessamine perfume; his taper fingers, bedecked with costly rings, held a volume of Spenser's Faerie Queen, his mind was intent upon Miss Thornhill.

The clink of spurs sounded in the passage, and Whichcote soon afterwards entered, redolent of the stable—a scent which, mingling with that of Chenevix's shop, formed an amalgamation most disagreeable, however pleasing to the various olfactory sense of different men, may singly be the one or the other odour. Bohun's cambric handkerchief was speedily raised to his nose, and the "overpowering presence" of Whichcote good humouredly commented on, without reserve.

"You are in orders for to-morrow, Villiers," said his late antagonist, not attending to the other; for Whichcote, blunt and boisterous as he often was, knew no further cause for malice towards a man with whom he had once sealed a social compact in the friendly grasp of hands. Indeed, he now felt himself upon much more intimate terms than before the quarrel. We should do injustice to Villiers, also, if we forebore to give him credit for the like feeling.

- " You are in orders for to-morrow."
- "With all my heart; but is it not early?"
- "Very late; but the Colonel is gone out of town for the day, and has made all the arrangements previously."
 - " For what?"
 - "The drawing-room."
- "Oh, it is to be to-morrow, eh?—and who am I to have for a commanding officer; since, as I happen to be nearly at the wrong end of the list, such must be the case, I opine?"
 - " Myşelf will have that honour."
- "Bravo!—Well, we must keep the ladies in order, if possible."

"There may be a more difficult task; as a riot is expected to be got up."

"By whom, and for what purpose? also, from whence do you draw your information?"

"In the first place, from Thornhill, who has had warning through the chief police magistrate; secondly, for the purpose of preventing the King from going to Germany; and to conclude," said Whichcote, smiling, "by the mob; or, to express myself in more liberal phrase, the people."

"Most luminously answered!—keeping pace with the times, you have perhaps instituted a republic of letters; since the last clause has been put where the first, I will not say ought to be, but where it was usually placed by rhetoricians.—Mais ainsi va le monde!"

"Aye-Sic transit gloria mundi! We live at the sign of the World turned upside down."

"A goodly application of the phrase! A poetical illustration of the practice you have

already put in force by beginning at the wrong end! But think you the King will suffer himself to be killed with kindness, and prevented by this superabundant show of hospitality from quitting our shores?"

"Scarcely; but I cannot blame the feeling which prompts such a manifestation of English sentiments."

"Nor I, be assured; though I wish Walpole had sufficient weight with him to render the cause of this popular excitement an unknown grievance. Is there any chance of our going with the King—if go he must?"

"Not the slightest. He might take Thorn-hill—which, fate forbid!—but he is too closely beset by Hanoverians, who lead him, 'nothing loth,' be it said, wherever they will, to think of having an English regiment at his heels; unless there is warmer work cut out for us than court ceremony."

"I wish we were ordered out of England, any where, Germany, Spain, India,—I care not, —the further the better—never to come back to this cold, heartless country, where money is the only thing prized, and poverty reckoned the most unpardonable of crimes;—where—"

"Hold hard! hold hard!—Why, what the devil crotchet have you got in your head now? The country is a good country enough for those who can live in it,—the people brave, honest, generous, and free—"

" Proceed!"

"But it must be confessed that we are retrograding from the high and palmy state we were in during the two last reigns."

"Spare me upon politics, my dear sir. I cede you the retrograde movement, even to the earliest days of Britain; since the women have taken to painting and patching their faces. It is a pity some of them cannot do the latter with their reputations."

"Did I ever hear such an ungallant man! Why, Bohun, can you sit still and hear the sex abused after this fashion?" "I give him up," said Bohun. "He is getting worse every day, and has already got his name abroad as the woman-hater."

"I wish," said Whichcote, smiling, "that he had taken up that profession a few days earlier; as I should have escaped being frightened to death, and the Major would have had a whole skin."

"How is the said Major?" demanded Villiers.

"I beg pardon for not inquiring sooner for your friend!"

"Friend as he may be," returned Whichcote,
"I believe that he gives us all fairly to the devil.
His wound is not like to prove mortal."

"I should indeed think not; Bohun, however, hopes the contrary," replied Villiers.

"By the way, talking of women, you must forgive me," said Whichcote, in a gay tone; his red, good-humoured face, radiant with smiles; "you must forgive me, if I have found out your secret before you intended that I should." "As how?" demanded the other, suddenly, and changing colour.

"Ah, you sly fellow!—you need not be alarmed; every body knows it was Miss Myddleton."

" Every body-the devil !"

Bohun started up in surprise. Not even to him had Villiers communicated the lady's name, for fear the tongue of rumour should become too busy; and now we may conceive the vexation with which this intelligence was heard by his late principal.

There is no need to prolong the conversation. Whichcote had in fact the day before visited at the Myddletons; and his groom, while waiting with the horses before their door, received the communication, duly embellished, from the very servant who had admitted Viola on that eventful night. Too credulous Villiers, to believe that with so many outlets, the secrecy of such an affair should have been retained! Whichcote

receiving this at second hand, was equally liberal in his turn to the various officers who had collected after parade to talk over the nothings past, present, or to come; and well indeed might it now be accounted public property.

CHAPTER VI.

"O let not virtue seek
Remuneration for the thing it was; for beauty, wit,
High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
To envious and calumniating time."

SHAKSPEARE.

THE next morning, at the appointed hour, the guards of honour for the Palace duties had been paraded, and marched off under their respective officers. The cavalry guards were stronger than ordinary; the men not on this duty remained in barracks, accounted for service, and their horses were kept saddled.

Mountains often produce mice, or become the original mole-hills, from which fancy or fear have transformed them,—so might it be in the present instance. A good general is, however, cautious not to be surprised; and to use a very trite, though not unapt peroration, the best way to preserve peace, is to be always ready for war. It may not in all instances be politic to shew this readiness; but that is for the consideration of those who are placed in such a position.

It was a sultry day of May. The Life Guards, in their splendid state appointments, attracted the general gaze and admiration of the multitude; the perfection of man, and the noble animal under him, eclipsing whatever of incongruous appeared in costume, and the natural pride of a Briton shutting out from his mind, as he beheld his countrymen attended by all the "pomp and circumstance of war," the contingent expense to the country of keeping up so gorgeous an array. For the one, it may be said that the eye becomes accustomed to all things; and for the other, though never less inclined to support a standing army, the people of England at that time had not the facility of arriving at

the true statistics of the country which they at present enjoy,—if enjoyment it may indeed be called,—to see continually the bottom of the purse, and to be still further from the hope of its being replenished, than were our great grandsires, full a century back.

St. James's Street was kept by the party under Whichcote and Villiers; while two additional troops were drawn up before the gateway of the Palace. The police were a nonentity.

The carriages began to arrive, with their plumed and ornamented inmates,—beauty, and youth, and splendour of apparel; and riper years protecting, not indifferent to display the while, and some, it might be, conscious, that if repute or person claimed not homage, diamonds and equipage would exact the same.

There was a prodigious squeeze within; without, coach after coach swelled the train, and slowly advanced, the rear being for some time totally immoveable, and the street completely blocked up a considerable way into Piccadilly The caution and good arrangement of the troops, however, kept a lane clear for their own movements, in case of need, in which a few files rode up and down, with now and then an officer, his horse's tail whisking as he wheeled, at the pressure of the spur, into the open mouth of some unwashed and less warlike artificer. The pedestrian crowd was thus early composed of various grades; very many of the better sort of tradesmen, and well-dressed women, showed themselves in different places. Here and there a beau might be seen, less careful of his pockets than was his tailor, standing unconsciously near him; the former armed perhaps in the security of having nothing to lose, yet feeling somewhat ashamed of being seen in such company. Knots of grooms and stable-boys discussed the points of the horses, and the sit of Whichcote's jackboot, in which they discovered a wrinkle too many. But by far the greater portion of the crowd consisted of journeymen of different trades, and congregated glaziers' boys, who, with an eye to their masters' interest and their own amusement, were, upon the slightest disposition to riot, ready with their pockets full of stones, and big with the fate of windows. All, however, seemed good humoured, and the day likely to pass off without excitement.

Suddenly an open carriage, of peculiar form, containing four foreign officers glittering with orders, drove out of Jermyn Street, and attempted to break through the crowd. A simultaneous cry burst forth of, "No Germans!"-" No Hanoverians!" &c. The horses' heads were seized, and personal violence would have quickly ensued, but for the timely interference of the military, who made their way in and surrounded the carriage, backing their horses again upon the mob, till they had cleared a sufficient space. Stones and dirt flew in all directions, nevertheless; crash went many windows, while the glass fell ringing on the pavement. Villiers informed the alarmed foreigners that they had committed a breach of regulations

in approaching by an interdicted route, which they were not aware of; but Whichcote, on the instant, resolved to let them pass, and the cavalry escorted their carriage at a gallop down St. James's Street, through a running fire of stones and the fierce acclamations of the multitude, between the lines of troops, who kept the passage clear.

Whichcote saw them safe through the Palace gates, and returned to his post. "No Hanoverians!" continued to be heard at intervals from the crowd,—"No Germans!—Let the King stay in England, and send away the foreigners!"—with various other oral demonstrations of an unquiet spirit, which at the time would have seemed disloyal in any other country than England. But our worthy compatriots love to speak their minds.

No sooner had Whichcote and his party resumed their stations, than his rosy fat face, with a few good-humoured jocular phrases, uttered in a true Yorkshire tone, caused a revulsion of feeling in the bystanders. "He's a right Englishman!" "Three cheers for the Life Guards!" resounded from all sides, and, without knowing the cause, the whole multitude took up the cry, while a continued and deafening cheer was heard from one end of St. James's Street to the other. It was said that the King turned pale at the sound,—for it made its way to the royal ear, the heat having occasioned the windows of the presence-chamber to be thrown open,—and he, whose breast was iron amidst the din of battle, quailed at the apprehension of popular tumult.

The cheers brought an increase of number to the already dense crowd, which was evidently encroaching, by degrees, on the limits assigned it. Villiers, with a few men of his party, gradually, but firmly, repelled the aggression,—a measure which elicited angry expostulations from those in his vicinity, though not from the people so immediately driven back: these contented themselves with dogged looks, and a

sturdy, perhaps we may call it passive, resistance to the weight and power of the soldiery, taking care not to get trodden down, but bearing, with all their force, against the horses.

Villiers was ordered by Whichcote to move with a strong party lower down St. James's Street, to be near the Palace, in case the troops there should be found insufficient to preserve order. Meanwhile the carriages had continued to advance slowly, and set down their fair and distinguished freights. There was a confusion in taking up: the orders had been misunderstood, and the coachmen cut through, and drove in all directions. The ladies screamed with affright, putting their plumed heads out of the coach-windows, and praying, in vain, amidst the crowd, to be let out. The horses plunged and reared, the servants and constables swore, the chargers of the cavalry were driven against, in some instances thrown down, and in many places spurred over the prostrate bodies of men and women. The scene was appalling.

Villiers collected his party, and, forcing a passage through the mass at all hazards, drew them up across the street. The cries of the populace were deafening, but the young officer was undiverted from his duty. A carriage, with the servants in splendid liveries, so richly laced that it was difficult to recognize the facings, and a magnificent pair of grey horses, dashed at the line of soldiers. The coachman had evidently been drinking. He was ordered sharply to pull up; but he broke in, and Villiers immediately ran the near horse through the heart. The noble animal shattered the poll as he reared and fell, and the off horse came down also. Several other carriages took advantage of the confusion, and drove rapidly past; but Villiers could no longer attend to them, for the footmen had descended and assisted from the coach in question Mrs. and Miss Myddleton, and he was instantly off his horse and by their side, out all yet salesman guote fairmen want as

Viola, near fainting, repulsed, however, the

attentions of the officer who had caused such havoc. A small space was kept clear by the troops, and the servants half led, half carried the ladies out of danger. For a few minutes Villiers continued by the side of Viola, trying to soothe her, and apologizing for the accident.

"Accident, sir, call you it?" said Mrs. Myddleton, in broken speech, and with a look of contemptuous rage. "It is a poor way of showing your spite!"

"Miss Myddleton—Viola," said Villiers,
"you acquit me of all knowledge—all intention—"

She shook her head, and waved him off with her hand, weeping bitterly.

"It was, indeed, unworthy of you," she said.

"Viola, you will drive me mad!" exclaimed Villiers, passionately. "Say but that you pardon me,—one word merely,—I cannot stop."

But she was silent. Villiers took her hand as they hurried along, protected by the troops: she drew it from his grasp, and he stood still.

The crowd closed in between them: he turned, regained his horse, and was again instantly and actively employed. The cries and execrations of the populace had accompanied him in his attendance upon the ladies. The Life Guards were loaded with every opprobrious epithet, and the allusions to the King and Hanover became each instant more open, and more fiercely reiterated. Brickbats and paving-stones flew in all directions. The riot act was read three times. The troops charged the mob, pistolshots were fired, and several sword-cuts dealt amongst them. Suddenly there was a cry of terror, which spread rapidly along from the distance, and a rush to the sides opened the passage for a party of Horse Artillery, which advanced at a gallop, halted, was pointed at the crowd, and the lighted matches held ready: it was, however, only a demonstration; a turn had taken place; the unknown or undefined horror of cannon had its effect; an opening was quickly made by the mob, and Thornhill, at

the head of all the remaining Life Guards, appeared and filled up the vacuum. Order was restored by this reinforcement, mainly assisted by the coming on of a thunder-storm. The precincts of the Palace, and the avenues leading to it, were by degrees cleared of the mob, and the cavalry returned with drawn swords to their barracks under a torrent of rain, which gloomily closed in the day.

In due time the King found himself in his beloved Hanover; but as yet we have not to treat of Continental proceedings, or royal movements: of these, their causes and effects, our pen must forbear awhile to discourse. We shall relate merely what concerns the less dignified hero of our tale.

Villiers, the next day, mounted his horse for the purpose of visiting the Myddletons, resolved to obtain a hearing from Viola, and explain away whatever injurious suspicion might have been created by the artifice of her mother, and which perhaps still rested on her mind: for a cooler moment of reflection, since the receipt of her note, had told him that this could scarcely have been the genuine production of one who had before promised that nothing should ever cause her to think less tenderly of him than at that instant. "But alas!" said he, "for the wisest and the strongest head, when guided by a woman's spirit! None may rest secure that a fortuitous blast of self-pride will not turn it from former resolves if there is but an imaginary wound."

It was clear to him that his mistress, not free from undue influence, had imagined his attack upon the carriage of her mother to be the effect of premeditation. Revenge for the apparent ingratitude displayed in her communication of cold thanks, she must have supposed, had been the active principle on his part; but had she known what insults, what aggravations, and even personal violence, he had that morning undergone, she would readily have conceded that exasperation; and excitement might well

blind him to the identity of an equipage where there was so much of ornament to dazzle. Also, should she not have made allowance for the responsibility attached to an officer on duty, who could not, without an infraction of such, permit even a royal carriage to pass?

How different a scene did not the streets of the metropolis now present to that of the previous day! All seemed to have forgotten the querulous spirit which had actuated them, save some few knots of idlers, who here and there hooted a constable that might be seen tearing down an inflammatory placard, stuck upon the walls while the watchmen had still enjoyed the balminess of their midnight dream prolongued.

Curiosity prompted Villiers to ride down St.

James's Street, and view the theatre of yesterday's war. A like motive had brought others
to the spot; but there was no symptom manifested of a disposition to renew the tumult.

Numbers of workmen were replacing the pavement which had been torn up, and levelling the

ground which the trampling of horse had afterwards cut and defaced. It was fertile of classic recollections for Villiers. Here had the foreign landau, so strange at that time to English eyes, dashed out of obscurity and quiet into instantaneous popular fury. In another place had been arrested the Myddletons' carriage, and this was the arena of confusion, of wreck, and bloodshed, presenting a scene that would not soon pass from the memory of those compelled to be spectators of its progress.

Returning towards Grosvenor Square, he gave his horse to the groom, and knocked at the Myddletons' door. All was silent. At length a woman opened it, and disclosed the hall, piled with packing-cases and trunks. Forebodings filled his heart, which proved but too well founded: the family had left town that morning, and were now some hours on their way to Burnel Royal.

lords to admitted

Years rolled.

Villiers, applying himself to the business of his profession, was now accounted one of the best soldiers in the regiment. Experience must belong to older heads alone. He had outstripped (by whatever strokes of good fortune it matters not) both Whichcote and Bohun in the race of honour, and passing rapidly through the subaltern ranks, he had now some time filled the office of Exempt and Captain in the first troop of Horse Guards. Be it not forgotten that he possessed a valuable friend in Ludlow.

He was, however, still a poor gentleman; and various of his creditors, finding that he neither had, nor was likely to have, money, demanded with much shrewdness the payment of all their bills: but as these applications could not be responded to in a manner conformable with the desire of the claimant party, Villiers gave his servant directions that no person having the suspicious appearance of a dun should henceforth be admitted.

And was Viola forgotten?

Far from it: the desire to obtain her hand was not less strong than ever; but he regarded as hopeless all attempts to gain her parents' consent to their union, while he remained unable to bring an equivalent sum, at least, to her fortune; and if he ever had entertained a serious thought of marrying her clandestinely, reflection soon gave him to believe that her own consent would never be elicited. But he was not made to pine for life, about the impossibility of this achievement. His professional duties, besides, helped to distract his thoughts from dwelling upon the cause for unhappiness.

With Viola it was far different: yet, uncertain as she might well be of the policy of yielding too easily to her mother's suggestions, with regard to the conduct of Villiers, she soon allowed her mind to become fully convinced that the insult and injury on the day of the drawingroom, as connected with resentful feelings on

shelt the grawing regrets of the heart tell us

his part, were purely ideal. Yet they were separated, and no explanation could now be led to by her.

The first access of grief, remorse, and disappointment over, her heart was of that bounding composition which, though it might have admitted into its core a subtle point, resists, as an elastic ball, the more obtusely-constituted elements, the rudeness of whose shock may bruise with their outward force, but which can effect no lodgement. Her cheek, then, recovered its portion of damask stolen from the rose, yet not so deep; and still she loved Villiers with fervour and truth: her dark eye sparkled as before, yet would it sometimes fill with an unconscious tear; her smile was not less animated, yet would it often check itself with a sigh, which told how much there was that strove to pass those lips, and might not.

Year after year passed: it was a sad, a bitter thought,—one that admits of no solace, and for which the gnawing regrets of the heart tell us there is no remedy. Time, time, which will never come again,—the moments that have slipped away,—that are yet fleeting, and cannot be recalled,—time ebbs, and ebbs, and still we are losing the scanty oil of life's uncertain lamp,—expended upon what? the expectation, it may be, of a more fortunate season when all our hopes shall have fruition,—a season that arrives not,—or if it does, will it bring with it the golden hours of youth? No, no! The things we wish for most, well says the philosopher, come not in truth, or if they come, it is not at the time we most desired them, nor at a season when they would have extremely blessed us.

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there as no remedy. Times tone a small novor cours again the mounts that have on the fam parts and while the pullpers of CHAPTER VII.

"That such a knave as this should wear a sword, who wears no honesty!" SHARSPEARE.

It is some time since our friend Ludlow has been before us; a few words then in parting once again. Yet, let it not be thought that the motto of this chapter has allusion to him; for, whatever the bluntness of his disposition, he was still the wearer of honesty,-a combination that, often affected, does not always stand the proof.

It was the spring of 1743,-an eventful period for England, and big with the fate of many. An army had the year before been sent to Flanders, as a demonstration in support of the Queen of Hungary, should the high contracting friendly powers, or the movements of the French in Germany, render it available. The intractability or supineness, however, of the states-general negatived all the active exertions of the English ambassador, and they resolved upon adhering to their original system of neutrality. After much idle parade, therefore, says the historian, the army retired into winter-quarters, having achieved nothing. The next year, or rather the present, as it dawned, promised to bring forth greater things.

To the great joy of most concerned, that troop of the Horse Guards in which the name of Villiers was enrolled, had received orders to hold itself in readiness for a march; and rumour said that Flanders would be its destination, whither the rest of the household cavalry had already preceded them. We will not avouch the cordiality of our hero, or, it may be, one other of the corps; for still the former was

he shook off rich on offers the gloomy feeling

indifferent to military fame. What reasons Bohun might have for reluctance to quit England, we shall yet forbear to pronounce.

But let us return to Ludlow for the minute that he grasped the friendly hand of Villiers, and bid him a long farewell.

"Charles," said he, "you are going on a dangerous service. I feel a presentiment that we now part for the last time. Yet, may you be guarded in the battle-field as on the quiet plain; and if the prayers of one like me can aught avail you, they shall not be wanting. May your cause ever be a good one, and in pursuit of honour; slay not needlessly; reap laurels, but not curses; shew mercy to the routed, and stain not the sword of victory with the blood of murder. Farewell—and for ever!"

His words sounded prophetically in the ear of Villiers; but as the latter checked the rising throb of regret that almost made him a woman at parting with his old and sterling friend, he shook off with an effort the gloomy feeling that oppressed him. The evening was closing in; and unoccupied, except by disagreeable thoughts, which he wished to dispel, he was about to saunter forth from his lodgings, when a "gentleman" was announced, who must be rather more particularly described by us; since in the sequel his conduct had much serious influence on the affairs of our officer.

It has not perhaps escaped the reader's recollection, that upon the night on which Villiers pawned his mother's picture, a strange-looking man eyed him with a peculiarly scrutinizing glance, at which he was for the moment annoyed, but which had given him no further uneasiness. The picture he had often thought of since with regret, as having been compelled to such a device to obtain money. He had, bit by bit, at length saved a sufficient sum to redeem it, and repaired for that purpose to the pawnbroker's; but the allotted time had long elapsed, and the miniature passed into other hands, where, it would indeed be difficult to say. Most sensibly did he regret this; for it was one of those things that we look back upon in the blackness and bitterness of sorrow, which, like that we feel for the departed whose worth was perhaps unknown or unappreciated by all the world else, still rushes to our bursting heart with a force that will not be repelled. Alas! it is no less unavailing.

The name of the man was Hans Schmidt. His earliest years had been passed in England, but his family now resided at Berlin; and he had thus acquired a slightly foreign accent in speaking the English language. A kind of citizen of the world, (though a disreputable one, it must be acknowledged,) he had talents equal to any undertaking, in which he would probably always succeed, if these alone were the requisites to success, setting aside honesty, or even character; but as the one is usually wanting where the other exists not, he was fain to live by his wits upon the wide world, and sooth to say, these sometimes stood him in good stead. His

great ambition was to make a figure; and to enable him to do so, it was necessary to have either money or credit; neither of which, to judge from his appearance, could he at the present time boast of.

We now find him, after a lapse of some few years from the accidental meeting in the pawnbroker's shop, introduced to the presence of Villiers; and it is probable that his having neither "letter of recommendation" in his countenance, except such as would say, beware of your pockets, nor a suit of habiliments respectable enough for a dun, gained him admittance to the Captain's society, which he would otherwise have found inaccessible. He had, in fact, rather the air of a street-robber, of which class there were, at this time, swarms about London; and as fashion then permitted the wearing of swords, these ruffians, ever affecting the dress of gentlemen, were usually armed. At the present day you shall know the character, now dwindled to a sharper or pickpocket, by his superfluous chains, his trinkets, and dirty finery, with an affected swagger, put on in imitation, as he believes, of gentility. Not alone, however, walk these men of "dashing exterior," as the Bow Street reports have it, but in threes, like the Graces.

Mr. Schmidt was enveloped in a short thread-bare cloak, trimmed with tarnished point lace; his closer garments were thus concealed; but from underneath appeared the end of his long sheathed rapier. He was a man above the middle height, strong built, and powerfully muscular, as far as his costume would allow Villiers to judge; for his person was much hid by the mantle. His complexion was fair, his eyes grey and prominent, in which lurked, or you might fancy it, roguery and mischief, and these were set off by a quantity of straight, lank, sandy hair: for the rest, he was squalid and dirty; and it seemed, by the leanness of his cheek, that a series of good meals had long been foreign to his lips.

The servant lingered in the room as the stranger was ushered in, perhaps from curiosity;

as the manner and appearance of Schmidt were not altogether pleasing to the trusty William.

1 have some communications to make," said the former, "which do not admit of witnesses."

The servant was ordered to withdraw; and the stranger taking a chair, with infinite coolness pointed to another, while Villiers in wonder complied with the tacit invitation.

"I perceive, sir," said he, "you do not know me, which is natural enough, seeing that we have not often met in society."

"" Really," said Villiers, with a sneer, " I do not think it very likely that we should!"

"And yet we have before now,—in very rich society too!"

Again Villiers sneered with a contemptuous laugh, and desired him to say at once what his business was.

"Perhaps you may remember a certain pawnbroker's in Oxford Road, where you—"

"Stop!" exclaimed the Captain, hastily, and mortified with the recollection, —"I do remember. You need say no more on that sub-

"It was, however, that very subject which led me here, and I wish to be your friend—if you will allow me, at least;—if not, we are both where we stood before, and no harm done,—only don't forget that you were then, sir, what I am now,—a reduced gentleman."

Villiers scarcely knew how to feel angry;—
there was so extraordinary a mixture of impudence, gravity, and easy temper in this man's
address, that he was inclined to tolerate in him
what would have procured another the outside of
the door: but he had little to fear; and setting
him down for a character, he decided that patience must be exerted, if he wished to draw
from him the intelligence he seemed fraught
with.

Schmidt resumed: "You know Burnel Royal, sir, I think?"

I should do so," replied Villiers, in sur-

"So should I, and do—and to convince you that I do, look at this; though, except to prove that I am not ignorant of your affairs, there is nothing particular in it." And he produced an old letter of no importance, directed to Mr. Gibbons, at D—, and signed by Lord Beaulieu.

Well, sir, is that conclusive?"

' Pray proceed," said Villiers; "and be quick, for I have numerous engagements to attend to."

"Oh!" said the other, "if you have any thing more interesting, I am the last man to prevent you;" and putting up the letter, he prepared to depart.

"Stop!" said Villiers, convinced from his manner he had some communication of consequence to make; though it was not likely to be a disinterested one.

"Ha!—Pray do you usually carry pistols?" said he, as the man, in rising, displayed the shining butt of one under his cloak, which by accident had fallen aside.

These are dangerous times," replied the

stranger; "but you have nothing to fear from me,—I give you my honour as a gentleman."

"Then pray oblige me by putting them on that table, during our conference," said Villiers, while he glanced at his sword, which lay on a chair near him.

Schmidt saw the action, and smiled in contempt; but took a brace of pistols from his belt, and placed them as desired.

"Now, sir," said Villiers, getting serious,—
"pray be explicit, and let me know your business; for this trifling suits neither with my time nor inclinations."

Are we quite alone?" demanded Schmidt, looking round; for the folding doors between the two rooms opened upon a dark space beyond.

" Quite, quite. What do you fear?" said Villiers, banging them to with impatience.

"Nay, I fear nothing," replied the other; "it was only for your own sake: I fear nothing, and I hope nothing—at least after this life. All my ills are earthly ones: there is nothing beyond

the grave to fear; and before either of us go there, we may mutually serve each other."

"How? How? In the name of all the devils, do speak plainly."

"The service, Captain Villiers, which I have in my power to render you is immense; the reward, though something to me, will be to you a trifle. I am a desperate man, and I must have money."

"You get none from me, my friend."

"Yes, I shall."

"Explain; for I must first find it."

"That is the very thing I came here to put you in the way of."

"Do that honestly," said Villiers, "and we will see about the other; but, however, you seem to have enriched yourself with a vengeance!"

"You are fond of your joke, Captain, and so am I occasionally; but have a care, for, as Dogberry says, 'I'm not the man you take me for.' I wish to be civil, and I expect other gentlemen to be so too." "Well, well, -come, come, -this money?"

"Sign that," said Schmidt, laying a paper, ready drawn up for signature, on the table, after searching for it a considerable time in a greasy pocket-book—"Sign that, and I'll engage you thirty thousand a year,—aye, and Burnel Royal too, and—"He stopped, though it seemed that he knew more of Villiers' affairs than he imagined, who now regarded him with amazement, and took up the paper, which ran thus:—

"I promise to pay to Hans Schmidt, on coming into possession of Burnel Royal, with the lands, tenements, and messuages thereunto pertaining, &c. &c. &c. the sum of ten thousand pounds."

"Is your name Schmidt?"

"Yes, sir, it is, for want of a better," replied he, speaking with his slightly foreign accent.

"And how the devil can you get me Burnel Royal, my good man?" said Villiers, doubting; and per sery much middled to jump over the

reference of signing are increased.

"Dail you I said the follow. "Very well, you need not; but you get nothing out of me all you do," and he began to field the paper as again.

"Sty." said Williams, "trust to my houser and generally, and tell me what you know about the affair."

The stranger laughed, and shook his head

No, we was quite so new as that, neither. Beatly you must think me a very simple fellow, to come all this way on purpose to trust to your honour and generately, for putting you into possession of thirty thousand a year. I tell you what, Mr. Williers, sign this or not, I leave lingland to-morrow, and then you may whistle for my scrap of knowledge; and yet it is one that will make Mr. Myddleton shake in his

yet, his many to it without bester herepaire.

shoes,—aye, and his wife too, and some one else; but without me you can do nothing."

Make it five thousand," said Villiers, as if he was bargaining for a horse, ming is to so the

won't abate one rap; and I let you off cheap too," rejoined Schmidt.

"Well, we will split the difference; come,"

"No, sir; no, sir. I am surprised you should propose such a thing to a gentleman. Sir, I have appearances to keep up, and, moreover, am going to travel on the Continent."

Villiers could hardly help laughing at the fellow's consummate impudence; but as he was now certain there must be something wrong about Lord Beaulieu's will, which he had all along suspected, he determined to sign the paper, and see what would be the result of Schmidt's information.

Give me the document," said he; and he put his name to it without further hesitation.

"You are a d-d hard bargain, Mr. Schmidt."

"I return you the compliment, sir," said the other, rather with the leer of an alligator.

"Now, sir,—now Captain Villiers," continued he, quietly folding up the paper, and bestowing it in the greasy pouch—"Now Burnel is your own, with all the lands, tenements,—"

"Well, well, that is all understood," said Villiers, impatiently; "but come to the point."

"I am coming as fast as possible. You will be sorry for the poor man, Myddleton, for he is innocent; but the woman—"

"Speak more respectfully of my relations, if you please," said Villiers, haughtily.

"Well, well, sir, I know you love them, and, to be sure, you have reason; but that is your affair. I've seen a good deal of the world, Captain Villiers, but I have yet to learn that people are entitled to respect who cheat the fatherless and the stranger out of their right."

There was a leer, Villiers thought, upon his

countenance as he said this, which gave it an expression truly diabolical; but it might be merely the shade of the room, or the light of the candles falling at a particular angle upon his face.

"Have you patience for a short story, Captain Villiers? Because, if so, order some wine, for it is dry talking, and I'll proceed. I am as yet rather a cup too low, somehow."

Refreshments were brought, and the stranger, after having partaken of them, commenced

THE HISTORY OF SCHMIDT.

"Unfortunate a wretch as you now behold me, I must tell you, sir, that my parents were respectable people in Berlin, and as you may perceive, I dare say, my tongue has something the guttural accent of its language, although I was born and bred in England. My father held,—I hope still holds,—a situation under the Prussian Government, of more honour than

profit; and would be, perhaps, a happy man, were it not for having so graceless a son; but the fault is not altogether mine. My mother died young, and my father was too much occupied with business,-do you take, sir?-to attend to my education. However, I managed to pick up a tolerable knowledge of different things,the languages, and so forth,-quite enough for a gentleman in our situation, for instance, Captain Villiers. All my father took pains to inculcate was, a desire to make money, or to keep what I had. To be sure, this was little enough, for he took care to practise what he preached, and it was not merely the theory he set forth: I had practical instances, Captain, practical instances every day. 'Don't put all your eggs in one basket,' said he, 'but lay something by for a rainy day;' but, sir, he never gave me an egg to put in my basket, and, alas! most of my days have been rainy.

"Neglected as I was, I had the run of Berlin; and although kept poor, I managed to get money enough amongst the idle fellows I kept company with, to do as they did; and having a turn for cards and dice, and withal, I can assure you, a pretty taste for Shakspeare, I took to culling of simples,'—by the way, should you like a little hazard, if you find the story long?"

Villiers thanked him ironically for the compliment, but protested he never played.

"I could put you up to a thing or two," proceeded Schmidt, "but I am quite indifferent about it, quite. Well, sir, I knew how to make a fortune out of a rix-dollar. The difficult thing, at last, was to get any one to lend me his money after this sort. Several men of rank in our set—you may smile, sir, but look at your own St. James's Street and its purlieus, are there none who might keep company with me, even in your estimation?—aye, many who would be honoured by my society, and yet rub shoulders with an Earl. But—

f If Hercules and Lichas play at dice, Alcides may be beaten by his page;

and, therefore, it was no extraordinary thing that I should occasionally be the winner of a tolerable sum. Now, these were the only fine days I ever had; but, as I forgot my father's advice, I made no provision for a rainy one, and spent all as fast as I earned it.

"I made many acquaintances, and could amuse you much with some of my adventures; but I will spare your ears at present, for I see you grow impatient.

"I became so idle, and was so much from home, now that I had come of man's estate, that my father, never very fond, at length detested me, I suppose for my absence and my scrapes. Perhaps his philosophy did not allow natural affection to exist in the world. What think you, sir, touching our relations? Is it so?

"I was, however, not wanting in the classics, and had read my Bible—aye, I was a Christian, but he was not. I remembered the story of the Prodigal Son, and I demanded, in like manner, my patrimony, protesting that I would journey into a far country, for I wished to revisit the scenes of my infancy, England, where money was to be had for the asking; but my father scouted me from his presence, and then I began to think I had been led astray: in fact, it was now that truth flashed upon me; and I fell into the society of certain men, who entertained more enlightened ideas upon the subjects of religion and philosophy than the rest of mankind. I scarcely, indeed, went all the way with them, although I persuaded myself at the time that I did. They, however, argued that the life of the soul ceased with that of the body, and that the grave was annihilation. In short, sir, truth flashed upon me, and made me what I am now,-a man of independent principles, free as the winds, unridden by Pope or Devil, and fearing neither. I believe that man was originally endued with the right, as he has the power, to shorten his days when he ceases to derive benefit from the world.

"Now, I was most unhappy from the poverty which assailed me, as you were when you pawned the—"

"A truce with that subject," said Villiers, sternly.

"Well, sir, let it be so," resumed Schmidt, after drinking a goblet of wine. "The knowledge of this truth comforted me, and, as I felt the freedom of a life which 'a bare bodkin' can put an end to in a minute, the world seemed gradually to become more valuable to me. A strange paradox this, but the feeling was strong. Yet, if there were no hopes beyond the grave, neither were there any terrors, and I was fearless of death, though I clung to life. Some of the more select of my acquaintance formed themselves into a club about this time, of which I became one. We entertained a peculiar set of opinions, which by some might be thought strange, as indeed were our actions. We argued that-but I have before given you the principles upon which it was founded,

"You, sir, are perhaps a member of White's. You have, at any rate, heard of the Kit-Cat—the Cocoa Tree—Will's—the Gridiron—and many others too numerous to mention: well, sir, it was like none of these. What think you that we were? Aye, by the world!—you may well give it up! We were suicides!"

"A very agreeable society! But you had, doubtless, fewer candidates than you would have had in London, especially in the month of November," remarked Villiers, trying to beat down the uncomfortable feeling which this subject invariably caused.

The stranger's eyes glared with a savage wildness, as he seemed to conjure up some horrible recollections*.

"London," at length resumed he: "you shall pardon me,—it is a great mistake about the English delight in self-destruction; they have not the requisite moral courage for a felo de se."

^{*} These disciples of Antisthenes actually existed.

Villiers thought of his father, and clenched his hands together with a desperate effort; but he succeeded in calming his rising agitation, and allowed the unconscious clubist to proceed.

"All your English suicides," continued he, "are committed in a moment of insanity. You are too priest-ridden,—too cowardly a nation—"

"Beware!" said Villiers, in a low deep voice.

"You want the moral courage, I again say," proceeded Schmidt, undisturbed, "for a felo de se. Look at France;—there are more cases of self-devotion in Paris in one night, than London sees in a month."

"It is a lie!" said Villiers.

" A what, sir?"

"A lie!" roared the Captain, while he struck the table with all his force, and his eyes flashed upon the stranger.

"Captain Villiers," said Schmidt, calmly, "I am not a bully; although, when urged beyond

forbearance, I know how to avenge myself. I perceive you think I called you a coward."

"If you had," said Villiers, menacingly, "your dead body would now have been lying there;" and he pointed to the floor.

Schmidt laughed, scornfully:—" Perhaps your own instead."

Villiers leaped up, for his blood was dancing in his veins, from the agitation caused by the subject; and he would gladly have put the point to immediate issue; but Schmidt eyed him with a cool, calm, expression of contempt; and even when Villiers snatched his sword from the chair where it lay, he touched not his, nor moved one inch from his seat; his eye quailed not, nor did a muscle of his countenance betray the least emotion.

"Psha, Captain Villiers," said he, perceiving his host staggered by the iron immobility he displayed;—" are we schoolboys—or, think you it is to try my skill with the best swordsman in England, that I came here?"

Villiers sat down subdued, perhaps flattered by the compliment, and flur 7 away his undrawn rapier. "Proceed," said he; "I have to beg your pardon; but you know not the excitement the topic you are on always auses me."

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CHAPTER VIII.

"Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs;
Make dust our paper, and with rainy eyes
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth.
Let's choose executors, and talk of wills.

-You have but mistook me all this while."

SHARSPEARE.

"Well, I said, look at France," pursued the stranger. "Truth is making rapid strides there. If we could but live long enough to see the glorious work developed—if we could but:—Oh! for a few years longer, and you will behold priest and bishop hurled down,—the wreck of crowns and crosiers, and the independence of man, and the majesty of the people firmly established; the mummery, the gauds, the throne, and the Babylonish woman.—"

"I thought you rejected the Scripture entirely," remarked Villiers.

"True; but, my good sir, may I not borrow a figure?"

"I have little patience for figurative language," said Villiers, "where plain speaking will answer the purpose better."

"Well, sir, you are the most unreasonable gentleman—and have spoiled as pretty a piece of rhetoric withal;—for I have, somehow, lost the thread—you understand;—pray send for another bottle of wine."

He drank deep; but wine on Schmidt had about as much effect as on the tun of Heidelberg.

"I might tell you a tale, Captain Villiers, that would harrow up your soul; but I will avoid prolixity, nor freeze your young blood, which I suppose has hardly recovered the effects of that severe winter of thirty-nine,—by gad, that was a tickler!

"The meetings of our club were held in a splendid house—a vast palace belonging to a

nobleman absent with the army. It remained in charge of the porter of our club, and we had no fear of disturbance. Besides, it contained secret chambers, that even the noble owner knew not of, the remembrance of which had passed away from all but his servant, to whom the knowledge had been handed down through two or three former generations of retainers, and now rested but with him-and us. There were numerous dark passages to thread, windings like those of a labyrinth-secret chamber within secret chamber-and a concealed entrance. The devil himself, had there been one, would not have found us out. Our number was limited, therefore we needed not much room. Yet, though the select were so few, we made proselytes without, and a member was every quarter added for one destroyed. You look amazed, sir; but it was the free act of the man-that is, if he was brave : otherwise-"

"You helped him off, I suppose," said Villiers.

"You shall hear," continued the stranger.
"We had a law, by which we bound ourselves to abide, by imprecations of the most fearful nature,—for the infraction rendered us liable to the death by the hands of all, or any of the club. This law obliged one of us to die by lot on a certain day in each quarter of the year. I'll tell you of the last sacrifice I saw, or rather, was meant to assist at.

"I had escaped for six years. The day came,
—the lot was cast. There had been for some
time a strong feeling against me in the club,
why, I am ignorant; except it was my being an
Englishman by birth; and, as my friends imagined, still more by prejudice. There was also
a young man named Goldberg, a great favourite,
who had been only the year before admitted.
The lot fell fairly upon him; yet, by the juggle
of a party, it was declared there had been a
mistake, and I was pronounced to be the victim.
None ever had gone alive out of that presence
whom the lot condemned to die. He had the

choice of death, that is, its shape; but it must be instant, and in that chamber; and he whose nerve failed him at the crisis, was slaughtered by his fellows in conformity with the oath—on the one part binding to destroy self, on the other to show no mercy upon him who evinced a want of that moral courage which raised our club above an army of braves. For it was well known that our society did exist; yet all the efforts of the police to discover us, had hitherto been unavailing."

Villiers began to feel some qualms of conscience in allowing a murderer, as he now confessed himself, to remain in his company; but interested in the narrative, he refrained from expressing his sentiments.

"I resisted this injustice," pursued Schmidt.
"I was not afraid to die; I had seen streams of blood flow in that chamber. The very walls were dashed with the spouts of gore, and the floor showed dark stains that told of many a deed of horror. Yes, sir, I had beheld self-

murders of the brave, and savage slaughters of the timid. I had been tired of my life when I entered that society; but I will confess, strong as my nerves were, and are, I was startled, I was heart-frozen; I became sickened with the mangling I was now forced to assist in, or to witness; but once a member, there was no escape;—your very thoughts were known, it would almost seem. The king's closet,—nay, the chancel, the altar of the church would not save you, if you but meditated secession; for discovery was dreaded, and all were spies, each upon each. But now, in my sixth year of probation, I had grown old, as it were, in blood.

"I have seen the youth of twenty, and the palsied hand of age attack self-life, with a courage to be admired by a Roman. I have seen the shrieking mouth of despair muffled, while more than one knife drank the heart's blood: how different the coward nature that required this coercion, from the admirable bravery that could, unshaken, unspurred, unexcited, delibe-

rately annihilate self! I had done so with the bravest, had my lot been fairly cast; but I repelled injustice with indignation, and refused to become the victim.

"In an instant a score of daggers were at my throat. 'Hold!' I cried,—'stand off,—I consent to the death.' They hesitated:—I plucked the shining steel from my bosom, and all scattered backward. I brandished my poniard, and made a movement. 'Beware there!' cried many voices to the sentinel without. I gathered up my whole strength, which is not a little, and flung myself at the door. It yielded.

"'Beware the devil Englishman!' shouted twenty voices in the softest German accents. You would have thought hell had broke loose—I say you would, sir. None dared to approach me. The sentinel retreated to the end of the passage, whose barred windows, at top, admitted little light,—a sort of doubtful glimmer, which is apt to make a man miscalculate his distance sometimes. He opposed his rapier: I

had my cloak rolled round my left arm, and put his weapon aside, while I poniarded him through to the very back.

"We fell together, rolling over and over, down one flight of stone steps. I heard the yell of many tongues,-all were on my traces. Perhaps you think you have run fast after a cricket-ball, or in a foot-race, Captain Villiers. before now; but did you ever run for your life? Till you do that, you will not know what fast running is. I ran-I flew,-lightning, scarcely thought, was quicker than my flight. I threaded the intricate passages, and long dusky galleries; I crossed desolate-looking chambers; I cleared flights of stairs at a bound, descending some, leaping up others; and, as breath had nearly left me, I found myself at a low small door, which yielded to my violence, and at once I was in the broad glare of day.

"My pursuers were baffled. I had unconsciously taken a wrong turn, and now stood, bloody and breathless, not alone, but surrounded by man's effigy,—or, to speak plainly, sir, I was in a statuary's yard; and here, thankful for such a chance of concealment, I hid till nightfall, when I crept out from amongst the dirt and rubbish, and presented myself suddenly before my father.

"It was Sunday evening, and the good old man was reading his Bible. He raised his eyes at the noise of my approach, (for I had not spoken,) and, beholding a figure covered with blood and dirt, he started from his chair in amazement; but quickly recognizing me, after a scrutiny assisted by his spectacles, he exclaimed, 'It is, indeed, my son! But what mean these torn clothes and this blood? Where is your wound? Speak, Hans,'—for by that name I was always called, though my proper—"
"Well, never mind," said Villiers.

"You mean 'who cares?" observed Schmidt.
"Well, that's natural, but not civil, on your part, Captain Villiers. I should have observed more courtesy towards you; but it is a matter

of no moment, I agree. Well, sir, I see you are impatient. 'I have no wound,' I replied to my father's inquiries: 'I have killed a man.' 'In a duel?' or by what unhappy accident are you a murderer?' said he. 'In no duel,' I replied; 'but in self-defence, and murderer I am not.'

elaimed. 'Alas, alas! It is come upon me as I expected! You have disgraced the name you bear, from the hour of your birth, and blood is the end of your career. Go, surrender yourself to justice.' 'I cannot,' I replied, hastily; 'and here I dare not linger: every minute is worth an age to me elsewhere. Others would be implicated were I to deliver myself into the hands of the law. You, even, would be in danger. No, no, it cannot, must not be.'

"My father was not easily startled from his propriety, and had quickly regained his composure. Still holding in his hand the halfclosed Bible, he regarded me with a look that few eyes have ever been able to gaze against with firmness.

"'You have killed a man,' he said; 'and yet, although you say it was in self-defence, you dare not surrender yourself to justice! You must then be a murderer, and a liar.—Away! No murderer, or blood-thirsty man, finds refuge with me. Away, before I set the scouts upon your track! Here you shall not stay, even if you would.'

"'Father, I am penniless,' I said, and cried piteously, for I was then young in years—'I am penniless, and I am innocent;' and I knelt before him, but as I did so the bloody knife fell from my breast.

and I, for my offences, am your father.' He turned away his head; but he spoke not;

and, going to a bureau, took out a purse of dollars, with a few gold pieces amongst them, and flung it at my feet: and I departed.

"I knew that all the daggers of that dreadful secret institution were thirsting for my blood. In Berlin I dared not stay that night; but in short, sir, I arrived in England safe and sound, and now—"

"What has all this to do with my affairs?" said Villiers, impatient, but not uninterested.

"Every thing,—every thing," replied Schmidt.
"Well, I was in England; but the devil of any gold or silver did I see likely to be picked up for the stooping, or had for the asking. Exertion was necessary, and being something of a musician, I took to fiddling. This was, however, a flight beneath me, and, moreover, the market was already stocked to fulness. I left London, and came out at one of the provincial theatres as an actor; and finding my powers great, I adopted the stage as my profession, and, though I say it, Captain Villiers, I excited no common

degree of sensation in the world. You have, doubtless, heard of Mr. Smith: well, sir, I am that man,—I, sir, am that celebrated tragedian. But whether from my slightly foreign accent, or from whatever cause, the people took a dislike to my performance, and the other actors became jealous, as I believe, of my superiority

"I was now rather adrift, and obliged to cast about for another plan of life. I thought of the law. I got letters of recommendation from my father, and behold me, sir, a limb of that renowned profession. I got hints on conveyancing by which—"

"I do not doubt you profited," observed Villiers; but Schmidt would not understand his meaning, and proceeded.

"I was, indeed, merely a humble clerk; but had I not been cursed with my usual bad luck, I might have been called to the Bar, and reached the highest elevation,"

"I do not doubt it," again remarked Villiers.

"I was suspected of going too great lengths,"

said Schmidt, nothing interrupted, "with the mysteries of my profession, and was obliged to seek a fresh employer; but my patron, not wishing to blast the prospects of a young man of ability like myself, recommended me to Mr. Gibbons, at D——,—ah, sir! now you comprehend,—you see, as Shakspeare says, 'the manner of it,' as it were: I perceive you comprehend how the land lies,—a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse," concluded Schmidt, with apparent innocence of purpose.

"Pray, Captain, order a little table-beer, for, as I said before, it is dry talking. Mr. Gibbons, sir," he proceeded, after a huge draught of the beverage—"Mr. Gibbons was a splendid fellow: with a thorough knowledge of the law himself, he could perceive where ability lay in others; and, in the more difficult parts of his duty, or, I should say, the more delicate, he always availed himself of my assistance.—Others of his young men strained at gnats, who would, for their own benefit, have bolted camels;

on the contrary, I made gnats of all the camels he offered me, and I soon became his favourite his glorious Apollo—his fidus Achates—his Orestes—his—"

"Pray, pray, spare me these classical rhapsodies," said Villiers. "I am apt to get nervous at the recollection of all I had to undergo in my more youthful days."

"You are yet young enough to do mischief," said Schmidt. "Why, the bloom of youth is still fresh on your cheek, sir,—my certes; but there is a lady yet,—well, well, sir, I see you are impatient. Lord Beaulieu, the fact is, about this time,—but I think you mentioned engagements, perhaps I had better defer my communications on this head."

"No, no,-go on, go on," exclaimed Villiers.

"Report came that Lord Beaulieu was dying. It appeared that he had never made a will; or if he had, it was not forthcoming. At all events we had to draw up a fresh one. I say we, for I was my patron's double; in me he put implicit

confidence, and I never deceived him; nor would I now divulge what I am about to do, but for his want of gratitude to me. Lord Beaulieu's sudden illness brought his sister to his bed-side, who, you know, sir, from being so much younger than himself, had never been a companion to him; and from some other cause, was not a great favourite, even to the day of his death. She was sent for, however; or whether she was or not, there she stood, by the old lord's bed-side, when we entered the room, according to his request. The will was drawn up, and Burnel Royal, with all its lands, tenements, messuages—"

"Well, well, that's all understood," exclaimed Villiers, agitated by various feelings.

"You must allow a lawyer to tell his story his own way," said Schmidt, seriously. "Now, sir, I am about to exhibit—I am going to unravel the most artfully weaved tissue of fraud, sir—"

[&]quot;Spare me all this flowery language," said

Villiers; "and say, in plain English, what you saw, or heard, or did; for every thing depends upon this."

"I know it does, sir,—I know it does, my good Captain Villiers; but the law still must have its course,—it must not be fettered, and will not be controlled."

"Well, sir, take your own way, in the devil's name!" replied Villiers, crossing his arms, and setting his teeth; while, as if forcing himself to be patient, he leaned back in his chair, and fixed his eyes on the ceiling.

"Now, sir," continued Schmidt, "perhaps you think that I was going to say the will was drawn up in your favour?"

"Or else you need not have gone all this way round to tell me any thing about it," said Villiers, a little staggered; for he had allowed his expectations to be raised to the highest pitch.

"No such thing, sir," replied the tormenting clerk,—Burnel Royal, with its lands, tenements messuages,——" "Damnation, sir!" thundered Villiers; "if you make use of that phrase again, you shall go out of the room faster than you came into it; and by another way, perhaps."

"Aye, perhaps,—and perhaps not, Captain," replied Schmidt, with infinite sang froid. "Why, you are the most impatient and unreasonable man I ever came across:—but to proceed, Burnel Royal, with—in short all Lord Beaulieu's property was devised,—you understand, sir, which means bequeathed—that is, testated,—in fact, left, as we may say, to—not to you, sir, but to Mrs. Myddleton,—to have and to hold, and cetera;—however, the will was made in her favour."

It would be vain to attempt a description of Villiers' perturbation, disappointment, and wrath, at this unexpected turn given to the narrative of the stranger. It would be, perhaps, no easy task, either to portray that stranger's countenance, as he sat gloating and gazing on the victim of his torment, like a cat, to use an uncommon simile, playing with a mouse. At length Villiers sat down, and buried his face in his hands.

"Still, and for ever a beggar," said he; as unconscious that Schmidt was in the room—
"a poor, despised, penniless outcast."

"From whom I am to get ten thousand pounds," observed Schmidt, in the same lamentable tone.

"Do not trifle with me any longer, sir," said Villiers, sternly; "or I may forget that you claim the rights of hospitality: but leave the house, before worse comes of it."

"No worse can come to you, sir," said Schmidt;

"you have already heard that Mrs. Myddleton had all the property left her, and when things are at the worst, they must mend. What think you of another will?"

Villiers made one bound across the room, from the side-table, where he had thrown himself in a chair, and seizing Schmidt by the collar, declared that if he did not make good the expectations he sought to raise, he would tear his heart from his breast.

"Keep your hands off," said Schmidt, shaking himself clear, and grasping his sword. Beware, Captain Villiers, how you touch me again. Speak what you like, I have shewn temper enough to your tongue to-night; but lay not your hands on me, or by the sacred powers you trust in, I will let you see there are swordsmen in Prussia as well as England, aye, and better too."

Villiers wanted not a second intimation of the kind. His sword was glittering before the eyes of Schmidt in an instant. They were both on their feet, and lunge and parry were exchanged with infinite rapidity. Both were so perfectly masters of their weapons, that five minutes had been expended without the slightest advantage on either side,—a long time for a sword encounter; and they were leaning with their whole weight against their crossed rapiers, pant-

ing for breath, when Colonel Thornhill hastily entered.

"What is the meaning of this, gentlemen?" he demanded, authoritatively.

"Sir," continued he to Schmidt, "I request you to sheathe your sword;—Captain Villiers, I order you to do the same."

Schmidt coolly returned his to the scabbard, and stood at a little distance, waiting, as it were, for the restoration of peace and quiet, to finish his errand. Villiers, highly agitated, and somewhat ashamed of being surprised with such a disreputable antagonist, threw his unsheathed weapon on the sofa, and sat down. At length he said, "Mr. Smith, I have not only put my hands on you, but drawn my sword against you in my own house. You have but yourself to blame, however; yet I must still acknowledge my regret for having done so, and beg once for all that you will tell me truly and fairly if any thing, and what, you know as connected with Lord Beaulieu, regards me."

Schmidt looked at the astonished Thornhill.

"Colonel Thornhill is my friend, and you may speak freely before him—if you at least have no scruples."

"Now, regarding the paper I have in my pocket, Captain Villiers, and which, if you had not been so hasty, I was about to explain the folly there would have been in my requesting from you, were I not certain that you would have the means of redeeming it; and from what I am going to say, you will see the little prudence there was just now in risking your life, when a few minutes' attention would have put all to rights."

"I hope it will," said Villiers; "but you try my patience to the utmost."

"Patience!—I did not know you had any," remarked Schmidt; "at least I have discovered none as yet."

"There, sir," said Villiers, petulantly, addressing Thornhill; "that is the way he has

gone on the whole evening, always quibbling, and never coming to the point."

"Nay, the latter position I deny," said the Colonel, jocularly.

"Thank you, sir, thank you for your friendly support," said Schmidt, with mock gravity. "You are to know that I have brought Captain Villiers good news; but whenever I am about to deliver it, he has his sword at my throat,"

"Go on, sir, go on, as you please," returned Villiers;—"I am your martyr, for the rest of the time you choose to honour me with your presence."

"Do you remember," at length resumed Schmidt, with the air of one who addresses himself seriously to business; "do you remember getting into disgrace with Lord Beaulieu about some college scrape, when you were going to be married, at eighteen, to the daughter of a miller near Cambridge; and when you were prevented by a friend of his lordship's coming down, you were so imprudent as to write a letter

which nearly broke the old gentleman's heart; a sort of feeling he soon recovered from, nevertheless, and got as angry as he was before grieved?"

"I do, to my sorrow," replied Villiers;—I remember it all perfectly,—I never saw him afterwards."

"Ah, well, sir, Haridis fletus—and cetera, and cetera;—however, it was at this time that he took so ill," pursued Schmidt;—"it was at this time he sent for his sister,—it was at this time that he made his will in her favour instead of yours;—and it was at this time that he did'nt die, to the great disappointment of the aforesaid sister, Mrs Myddleton."

"Good," said Thornhill; "your style is perspicuous and decided, though peculiar;—pray proceed."

"But this was not very long before he did depart, in good earnest," observed Villiers.

"Right, sir; and before his death he made another will, by which he devised certain estates

in Cornwall and Gloucestershire, besides Burnel Royal, with its lands, tenements,—"

Villiers foreseeing what was to come, this time burst into a hearty laugh.

"And messuages, and cetera, and cetera, and cetera," roared Schmidt, in a corresponding tone of good humour,—"to Charles Villiers, Esq., which will bring him in an annuity of about £30,000; though the first year he will, I entertain a suspicion, only nett twenty thereof."

"How is that?" demanded Thornhill, surprised, yet delighted at this unexpected piece of good fortune to his friend.

"Oh, the Captain understands."

" And agrees," said Villiers. "But where is the will?"

"That is matter for your private ear," returned Schmidt,

"I go," said Thornhill. "I only came at your servant's request, who said that pistols and swords were somewhat rife at an earlier hour of the evening."

"Nay, sir," exclaimed Schmidt; "you shall first pledge the rightful heir in a bumper,—by mine honour but you shall!"

"A strange fish, i'faith!" thought the Colonel; but allowing himself to be detained.

Charles put his last bottle on the table.

"Now then," cried the Prussian, rising, with a full goblet in hand,—"A health, a health, sir!—I give you, 'that hopeful gentleman, Captain Villiers,' as old John Guillim hath it. He beareth sable, a fesse between three cinquefoils, argent:—hip, hip, hurrah! Long may he worthily, and with honour, bear the same!"

"Curse your cinquefoils!" said the Colonel.

"Let them be good downright guineas; Or, instead of argent."

"Right, sir, right;" returned Schmidt;—
"you are the man for my money.—Right, sir, right; though the last is good enough, so there be plenty of it. And I prefer such a blazon to that of the noble Comes, Conradus Wittenburgensis."

What may that be?" demanded Thornhill.

"Marry, an empty purse, proper!" cried Schmidt; and as he replenished his glass, the Colonel took the opportunity of departing.

"Caroline will give you breakfast," said he, as he shook Villiers' hand.

Charles nodded assent, and he was once more alone with the Prussian.

"Now, Captain," said the latter, advancing, with determination on his brow, yet with more coolness than from his frequent libations might have been expected—"I swear by the world, and all you hold binding in it, that you may tear my heart out—that is, if you can, before I give you one iota of satisfaction on the subject of the will, unless you as solemnly declare that, whatever I may have done with regard to it, I shall not be implicated in point of law;—that, in fact, you will not proceed against me;—and further, that if I should be likely to suffer, you will protect me to the very utmost of your power:—and yet further, that you will take such steps as may

prevent more of my evidence being required, than is absolutely and essentially necessary to the putting you in possession. Perhaps no legal process may be entered into; but should there—"

Villiers made the required asseveration, and then demanded what Schmidt knew.

"I know that I have got, and have had, ever since it was made, the will in my safe possession—or as good; and now I will tell you how it came there—"

I was at the drawing up of the first will, as I before told you. I was not, however, at the second; but I knew, from the bustle of importance about my patron, Mr. Gibbons, and the frequent journeys to and from Burnel, that something was in the wind. I am not easily put off a scent, when I get my nose on it; and I know not what more than curiosity could have at the time induced me to pry so closely into this affair. I succeeded, however, to my entire satisfaction. Mrs. Myddleton had hurried down on the report of the old lord's second illness; and I have good

reason to know that she and Gibbons were at that time often closeted together. What was the result of their conferences at the time, of course I could only suspect. How much Gibbons got for concealing this last will, or for its destruction, as he believed, I never knew. He was at this time overwhelmed with business; and to add to his trouble, however profitable all this might be, his two other clerks deserted him, in jealousy of his shewing me so much favour; and he left the will just signed, and witnessed by two country servants, carelessly enough on a shelf, exposed to the fingers of any one who chose to inform themselves of its contents: and this did I, and observing the mystery and care there was about the affair, I flung some old waste parchments in its place, which I told the maid to burn that very afternoon, taking especial surety that I had got the proper document safe.

"Well, sir, I waited and waited, to see if there would be a piece of work made. Gibbons, I could perceive, knew not what, in the hurry of

attending to other business, he had done with the will. He fidgetted and hunted, and at length questioned me about a parchment, not naming the instrument; and with one of my most ingenuous and innocent looks, -oh! that he, of all people, should have been taken in by them :- I told him of the numerous old torn parchments having been destroyed. A gleam of satisfaction lit his face up when he discovered this; and again, and again, he demanded if I was certain. I reiterated my confession of having unconsciously caused the accident, and feigned immense sorrow for the burning, when he comforted me by forgiveness, saying it was a thing of no great consequence; but right glad was he to find such. as he believed, had been its fate. Of course his communications with Mrs. Myddleton on the subject I can only guess-perhaps I may wrong her; but appearances are certainly not in her favour."

" And what did you with it?" demanded Villiers. "I put it in a tin case, for future use, such as the present, you see, sir; for I do not wish you to believe that I thought of the gratification of serving any body but myself by it."

"I do you every justice," said Villiers; "but where, especially, may this said case now be?"

"It is buried in a wood, some two or three miles out of D——," replied Schmidt, "where, by particular marks, opposite a mass of rock, and near a stream of water, I could put my spade on it almost blindfolded."

"You must be a clever fellow," said Villiers;

but are you sure it is there now?"

" I have taken the best means to ascertain its security."

" How ?"

"By never going near the spot since, and thereby not inviting suspicion."

Villiers thought, "should this fellow die, the cause is lost to me for ever. How fortunate that our quarrel ended so well!"

He resolved to lose no time then in possessing

himself of the precious relic; and having taken measures accordingly, or rather laid plans with Schmidt for them, the ruffian was dismissed.

"A most agreeable acquaintance!" said Villiers, as he withdrew,—a sort of assistant murderer by profession, an acknowledged sharper and cheat, and in all probability a notorious thief. I hope he will not honour me with his company in the streets. "And yet," continued the Captain, "a pleasanter piece of intelligence than this he has brought, I have not received for some time."

The night was now waning; indeed, when Villiers looked at his watch, he found it near four o'clock. There was sufficient to occupy his thoughts; and the remainder of the wasteful part of the twenty-four hours allotted to man's existence—yet a blessed and balmy waste—was expended in pacing up and down his room, building castles and throwing them down, with the facility which long experience had given him in the art. Sleep he could not; the presence

of Schmidt had contaminated him, he thought, and the deplorable want of all principle manifested in his history gave him a sensation of loathing he could not for some time shake off.

CHAPTER IX.

"O sacred fire that burneth mightily,

Well did antiquitie a god thee deeme,

That over mortal minds hast so great might,

To order them as best to thee doth seeme

And all their actions to direct aright."

Spenser.

"Light thickens, and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood?
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse."
SHAKSPEAR.

Instead of going to bed, then, Villiers made a toilette, rode for an hour, and appeared at the breakfast-table of Colonel Thornhill. Here he found the host and Bohun,—the latter now Brigadier and Lieutenant, and hoping soon to reach the next step; but still as juvenile in appearance as when we last saw him reclining on a sofa in his friend's room, and reading Spenser's Faery Queen.

Caroline, the young, the pretty, the spirituelle Caroline Thornhill, soon joined the party; but, as she kissed her father, and put her hand into Villiers' as an old friend, why was there more frankness, more pleasure to the unobservant spectator, than when she surrendered her fingers to Bohun's clasp? Why, when this occurred, did her pale cheek assume a rosier hue, and why did her blue eyes sparkle with a more vivid lustre?

Truly, Villiers, as he appears to have been in the secret before, might inform us. Bohun would not; Thornhill it had never struck; and it would least of all be fair to interrogate the young lady herself, who now sat presiding at the breakfast-table, with as fair and delicate a form as ever the monstrous mode of the day disfigured. The high stays of singular austerity, the pointed stomacher, the waist of preposterous length, the sharp and high-heeled shoe with its buckle, the too voluminous masses of rustling silk or brocade, that just permitted the extreme point of that little-foot to peep out—all was

extravagant; and nothing left by stern tasmon to nature, but the lily fairness of her cheeks, of an oval almost approaching to rotundity, and the luxuriant tresses of light brown that curled down her neck.

After a laugh at the interview he had somewhat suddenly interrupted the night before. Thornhill congratulated Villiers on the good news that had been communicated; but they kept up the conversation in a mysterious, though jocular tone, which only served to raise the curiosity of Caroline and Bohun. These could not, however, be gratified.

"I asked you to come to me this morning," pursued the Colonel; "as I shall have much business to attend to, and preferred telling you at the breakfast-table to writing what I meant to say, which is, that, as the regiment does not embark so soon as was expected, by a few days, as I hear from head-quarters, you may take the opportunity of running down to Burnel, or at least of making what arrangements you can

in any way before we start; for I think you should lose no time in an affair that so nearly concerns you: meantime, I am close as an oyster,—secret as Caroline here, seeing that she knows nothing of the matter."

"Oh, Captain Villiers, I am so glad! Then it really is to be?" said the lady, clapping her hands together.

The Captain laughed at her mistake.

"You have promised to be bride's-maid, recollect, when it is to be," said he; "but I believe the bride must be consulted on that point: however, I am afraid you need not as yet set about preparing your dress."

"Oh, oh! So then it really is une affaire finie!" said Bohun.

Villiers, smiling, held up his finger.

"You had better not be too facetious, young gentleman, or I may show you up," said he.

The Colonel was too much engrossed with returns to notice this little piece of raillery, and, anxious to bring to a conclusion the important matter he was now bent upon, Villiers withdrew, leaving Thornhill to his papers; and Bohun, happy to be released from his presence, to pass a delightful hour in the drawing-room with Caroline,—to assist in feeding her birds, and trimming her geraniums,—to wind her silk, and fix her drawings,—perhaps even once—oh, eminently happy man,—to touch her hand!

He formed, at once, the determination of sending Schmidt down to D——, there to await him; and having, in pursuance of this resolve, mounted his horse, and taken with him his trusty groom, he departed from London.

Without adventure, he arrived in due course at the Rose and Crown, in the old town of D—, where he put up his horses, and ordered dinner; after which he sallied forth, it being now dark, in search of the public-house, (for it could scarcely be dignified with the name of an inn,) at which Schmidt proposed to stop.

He had not yet arrived,—a circumstance which Villiers was by no means sorry for, as he reflected that, if time were to have hung heavy on his hands while waiting for him, in the event of being first at the place of rendezvous, his fertile genius might suggest some new career of roguery to start upon, and Villiers look in vain for his assistance. It is probable, indeed, that had Mrs. Myddleton been a woman more easily worked upon, he would have tried whether a greater sum than that for which he had got the bond from the Captain could not be extracted from her fears,

Weary with his ride, and more weary of that most wearisome of places, an inn at a country town, having dined, heard his groom's report of the horses, and read last week's paper, his feelings of satisfaction at Schmidt's delay underwent a change. Believing himself duped, he was undecided as to whether he should return immediately to town by post conveyance, or give Schmidt still a few hours' law, when the door opened, and the person in question appeared.

He had, on the faith of the ten thousand, bedecked himself with a fine set of habiliments, in which tawdriness and bad taste strove for the mastery with dirt. He accounted for not having been down before Villiers, according to the original intention, by premising that the ancient fly-waggon or coach in which he came had broken down two days ago, and several hours delay was the consequence. He had, in fact, but just descended from that sacrificial car, which had much of a Jughernaut appearance, and he might, by his own extraordinary costume, and the begrimed state of his person, with a little stretch of the imagination, have been taken for its priest.

Villiers, burning with impatience to possess the important document, would hear of no delay, but, sending for mine host, hired a caleche, and prepared to set out.

"May I ask your name?" said the landlord. It was incautiously given.

The groom, however, might have been in-

terrogated; and besides, he was not upon an unlawful errand; yet, near Burnel, in a neighbourhood where his name was well known, and wishing to avoid impertinent obtrusion, he regretted that he had not concealed it.

Schmidt had gone out to prepare for the excursion, and while the landlord, with the door in his hand, spoke to Villiers, the latter had not perceived a stranger enter and seat himself at a little distance, this being a public room. He was a respectable looking man, portly, and of a ripe age, dressed in a suit of black velvet, and wearing a peruque of peculiar length and rigidity of curl. At the name of Villiers the stranger looked round; but again clearing his throat from something that seemed like the amen of Macbeth to stick there, he rubbed his hand across his face, resumed his position, and set himself to perusing some papers which he had meanwhile drawn from his pocket.

The landlord withdrew, and Schmidt now vol. II.

entered, announcing every thing as ready. He had, he said, provided a lantern and a spade.

"Hush!" said Villiers, pointing to the stranger, who was, however, apparently immersed in the papers before him, leaning forwards with his face pressing upon his hands, and his back towards the speakers.

Schmidt stopped short on perceiving him, and concluded by proposing to start; as Warringham, a town in the opposite direction from that they meant to take, was fifteen miles off. "I will but drink something to keep out the night air, and be after you festinately," said he, as Villiers walked out towards the gig in the stable-yard; for Schmidt had charged the groom not to bring it round. And much the man marvelled what his master was going to dig for at that time of night. Visions of new-made graves and murders crossed his mind; neither was he without his misgivings as to Mr. Schmidt. He concluded, indeed, by begging Villiers to let him follow on a post-horse, which was not

unwillingly permitted; for, though as little given to suspicious fear as most men, our hero did not quite admire the character of his chaise companion.

"Squires," said the stranger in black, beckoning the red-faced landlord to him, as, with an air of mystery, he re-entered, when the travellers had started, "did you mark that fellow in the green and gold riding coat,—I mean the cutthroat looking dog, not his master?"

"I did," returned Mr. Squires; "and I wonder he has the impudence to show his nose here again. I thought he had been hung long ago."

"He would have been so if all had their deserts," replied the other; "or if I had not been so foolish as to let him off clear when he forged my name to a bill for seventy pounds, ten, and sevenpence, on the bank of Messrs. Littlegold, Smallnote, and Company. You have no doubt it is the villain Schmidt?"

"None in the world. Didn't you notice his

Dutch gibberish way of speaking? Who the other is I don't know; but he says his name's Villiers, and, for all he's got a couple of as good nags as you'd wish to look on at Horncastle of a fair-day, I think he's no better than he should be; or else, sir, why should he be in company with that chap?—that's what I go on. Villiers," he continued, thoughtfully, "he can't be the young fellow that Lord Beaulieu used to be so fond of, and then behaved so ungratefully to the old man, he did? They say he took a dagger up one day, and was going to stab him with it, only he was stopped by the servants."

Gibbons laughed in his sleeve at the landlord's credulous simplicity, and, sooth to say, sleeves were at that time sufficiently ample to admit the phrase; but if he indeed thought that Villiers was the man he had so deeply injured, that he was the son of him upon whom he had wreaked a double vengeance, and on the remembrance of whose dread fate he still gloated, yet unsatisfied, he was sufficiently wary to leave the plodding innkeeper in ignorance.

For Schmidt, hell possessed no pit deep enough to receive so accursed an object of his detestation. From strong doubts, which he dared not express, Gibbons had gone to the most positive certainty that his cunning and faithless clerk had spirited away Lord Beaulieu's will, and not one quiet night had he since known. In more than one respect he was in this man's power, and the master dared not impeach his integrity, with a sword hanging over his own head. The sudden appearance of Schmidt after years of absence, his being in company with one of the name of Villiers,-for with his now manly person Gibbons was no longer acquainted,-and the extraordinary allusion to a spade and lantern, raised his curiosity and suspicions of he knew not what, to the height; and immediately on leaving the Rose and Crown, he repaired to his stable, from

whence he took a powerful horse, assumed his whip, spurs, and pistols, mounted, and rode quickly to the first turnpike on the Warringham road, which was not more than a quarter of a mile off.

It were idle to stop in this part of our tale, in order to recount at length the fraud practised by Gibbons upon Lord Beaulieu, as to his having been intrusted with messages to him and to his daughter by the unhappy secretary of Lord Stair, whose embellished history all Paris rung with, and whose identity he had remained sufficiently long to ascertain, after the gambler's death became known,—of the attorney's procuring himself to be chosen the old peer's man of business,—and of numerous incidents, which it were equally fruitless here to recite.

The principal roads (they were but four) leading out of the town of D—, formed a cross at its market-place. Taking the one we have named, then, Gibbons was soon at the

turnpike man's side, from whom he elicited the information that no gig, curricle, chariot, coach, or carriage, of any sort mentioned on the toll-board, had passed that way for the space of one hour and twenty-three minutes; and the lawyer kept his penny in his pocket, and passed not through the gate: but reflecting that when it is wished to put you on a wrong scent, people very naturally do not try to lay you on the right one, he pricked forth the town by the opposite road, and on arriving at the turnpike, learnt that the gig in question, with a servant riding behind, had passed through about half an hour before.

No time did he lose in paying the toll; and, when clear of the gate, put spurs to his steed, making the pebbles fly in every direction.

"Hark!" said Villiers to his amiable companion, "did you not hear a horse?"

"To be sure I did; and do now. William's old poster is not shod with list. He is far behind though; but then we had the start of him."

"Yes, about five minutes; not more," said Villiers. "I am sure I hear two horses,"

"To be sure you do," said Schmidt. "Are you not driving one?"

Villiers, disgusted, resolved not to speak another word, but drove on till they had got about three miles out of the town, when, by the other's direction, he turned up a bye lane, thickly shaded at the sides with high hedges and tall elms. The moon was, however, beginning to peep out, and showed them the way in advance, where the red banks, and a turn occasionally, which involved the continuation in mysterious obscurity, and again lit the lane with an uncertain light for about three or four hundred yards beyond, seemed as convenient a spot for robbery or murder as that part of the country might afford. They passed a narrower lane which branched off on one hand, and still pursuing their course for about five minutes, they came to a sort of moveable bar gate, when Schmidt laid his hand on Villiers' arm,

and, leaping out, removed the bars out of the way.

"Drive in here," said he; and Villiers did as he desired.

They were now on turf, though there was a cart-track leading into the heart of a thick wood, which Schmidt said they must enter. All within seemed pitchy dark, and a deathlike silence reigned around. Villiers pulled up, after passing the barrier, determined to wait for his servant before he entered the wood, and by no means sorry that the man had proposed coming. Both the gig companions seemed impressed with the awful stillness of the scene. At a distance the rushing of water gave additional effect to the nearer silence; the tall trees were not moved by a breath: the gnarled trunks of those on the skirts of the wood showed, each, like the distorted shape of some grey demon. The distant, but approaching tramp of a horse now somewhat broke the deep solemnity, but all else seemed buried in a sleep, silent and peaceful as that of the grave.

Villiers waited impatiently for the groom: at length he appeared, and they drove on without allowing him time to come up; but the road, on entering the wood, became so bad as to threaten destruction to their wheels and springs, and it was agreed to walk the rest of the way. The horse and gig were now given in charge to William, the lantern lit by a match and tinder-box which Schmidt had brought, and the spade shouldered.

Schmidt led the way with a firm step, shading the lantern in his cloak, as its light rather tended to confuse him. They followed the road for some short distance, when, taking the noise of the stream for their guide, they struck into one of many paths, and after threading it for a few hundred yards, a glorious scene of rock, wood, and rushing water burst upon the view. It was a comparatively open space, into which the moon's rays had found their way, and the whole of the woody amphitheatre was now bathed in a flood of silver, though not sufficiently bright to take away the dim uncertainty of objects that stood back.

"I have lost my marks!" said Schmidt, as they halted in this spot—"Yet no, that single ash should have the bruise of a trowel in its bark still, if it be the one, for I had no spade with me then; but it was some years ago."

Villiers, excited to the highest pitch of impatience, rushed to the tree: the mark was there, the bruised cut of the trowel scaled over like an imperfectly cicatrized wound. He called Schmidt's attention to it.

"Aye: now," said he, "this ash, and that deep hole where the smaller branching stream loses itself under ground, must be kept in one;" and, retreating as he spoke, he kept his face to the two objects till his back touched a mass of perpendicular mossy rock. "Turn this corner to the right, measuring ten paces, and

we are on the track," said he. He did so, Villiers attentively following. They were now in another, but smaller, open space, separated from the first by the ledge of rock, and near the noisy stream. Schmidt leaped up a green bank a few yards, and, on a flat sort of terrace, a naturally square stone presented itself to their view. Schmidt struck his spade in the earth.

"Our lantern is not of much use," he observed to Villiers. "If I had known the moon was so bright, the devil should have had me before I burthened myself with it."

But Villiers was not attending; some more distant object had riveted his glance.

There was a solitary grandeur in the scene, which had interested him highly. The foaming water leaped from rock to rock in petty emulation of some greater stream; yet it was wild, beautiful, and solemn. The crags which bordered the river, as well as those dry and mossy, where he stood, ran inwards from its edge in a thousand fantastic shapes, and here and there

were fissures and caverns, by which in many ways ingress to the place where he stood might be gained from the obscurity beyond. "It must be fancy," thought he. Again he turned towards Schmidt, and discovered that he had dug out the object of their search. With a cry of exultation, his companion now held up the rusty tin case in which the treasure was deposited. But rejoiced as Villiers might well be at the circumstance, his observation was not so entirely directed to Schmidt, but that he could, in a chasm of the rock above him, distinctly perceive a human face, upon which the moon did not indeed shine, yet the reflected light from the rock brought it out in clear and ghastly truth: It moved. There could no longer be doubt. He rushed with a sudden exclamation past Schmidt, towards the place; but the appearance had vanished, nor did the least trace or resemblance of human being remain.

He told Schmidt of his belief, who laughed and jeered Villiers, saying he supposed it was the devil, or some of his fraternity. "Lend me your knife," continued he, "for the rust has made the top stick." Villiers did so; and Schmidt taking the will out of the box, read, by the lantern's light, two or three lines, and showed Villiers his name. "Now are you satisfied that I have told you truth, my noble Captain? But stop," said he, putting the will back into its case. "I will deliver this to you in due form when we get into the town; for I must first read it over, and make sure of its being all right."

Villiers thought this was an over degree of precaution; but he allowed him to take his own way.

"I wish we were well out of this infernal wood," said he; "for I am not half satisfied about that face."

Schmidt laughed hoarsely, and shouldering his spade, began to move.

- " Give me the lantern," said Villiers.
 - " Nay, it is of no more use now," said the

other; and he flung it into the stream. "'Swim there, thou flaming minister!" he said; "'if I put thee out'—and cetera, and cetera,—you know the rest."

They were now in the narrow path that led into the cart-road through the wood, when they heard a horse neigh, not very far off, but in a different direction from where their own had been left, which immediately answered.

The two wood companions stopped.

"All is not right," said Villiers. "I wish you had not flung away the lantern, for I cannot see an inch."

"Come, we are all clear now," said Schmidt; as he leaped out from the tangled gorse and brushwood into the broad track.

But Villiers was some yards behind; and labouring under the inconvenience of immense boots and spurs, which caught and detained him at every other step, was not on equal terms. He fell when just about to leap into the road track; and at the same moment he heard a struggle—a shout of execration from Schmidt, and a heavy fall within a few yards of him. Maddened with the tangling underwood and brambles, he at length, by main force, disengaged himself, and rushed out to the fray, where he arrived just an instant too late to prevent Schmidt from nailing a man to the earth with his sword, whom it appeared he had first knocked down. He poured forth a volume of horrible execrations, in mixed German and English, and trampled on the face of his victim, who was not dead.

Villiers pulled him off, but he rushed once more on the unhappy wretch, and wreaked the vengeance of a brute upon him.

Villiers struck him aside with a blow on the breast, and was nearly run through for his temerity.

"It is the damned, the bloody villain Gibbons!" cried he, kicking the dead body over,—for such it now was. "You were right as to the face you saw. It was enough to scare all hell, you might well think, to see his accursed visage in such a hole as this. But we have him safe; and now let's start, for I'll be bound he's not alone. He made a desperate snatch at the case, and snapped a pistol at me; but that spade is a good leveller!"

Villiers was horror-struck.

The whole thing had so much the air of some villanous transaction, ending with a midnight murder, that although perfectly innocent, and only endeavouring to obtain his own, he shuddered for the probable consequences to his character, to his liberty, or to his life.

"Come," said Schmidt, "no use thinking of it; if I had not pinked him, he would have done for me; so now we must get his carcass out of the way."

And he wiped his sword in the dead man's cloak, and returned it to its scabbard.

"We may as well first see what he has got in his pockets, however." "For your life, no!" said Villiers, dragging him back, as he knelt down to rifle the body.

"Our innocence of the charge of murder may not be so easy to prove, that we should commit robbery as well."

"Proof?-innocence?" said Schmidt; "why, who the devil is to know any thing about it?"

"Every one,—the whole town will be upon our track immediately he is missed," replied Villiers; "and therefore we had better give ourselves up at once, and court a full inquiry."

"And be put in jail till the assizes!" said Schmidt; "and be, at any rate, tried for murder, and—but then, it will be a good get off from going with the army to Flanders, where there will be some sharp fighting, I expect."

"Ha! Do you dare?" said Villiers, menacingly.

"Pooh! me—I don't say anything about it; but the world, the world, noble Captain, will not let you off so easily, depend on it. Do you forget the squibs, the jokes, the jollity, about young Greenly, last week, in London, keeping the fifth commandment so scrupulously,—leaving his regiment which is just ordered abroad,—that his days may be long—ha! ha! That would sound well for Captain Villiers, the first swordsman in—"

"Silence!" said Villiers, in a deep, hoarse voice. "Let the body lie, that it may be found, and have Christian burial."

"And that we may have Christian confinement, on suspicion of being—innocent, if you will!" said Schmidt, with a sneer. "No, no, hardly. Come, don't stand there, as if you feared old Gibbons would get up and bite you; but help me to lug him along."

And Villiers, worked upon by the arguments and persuasion of Schmidt, assisted to remove the body.

With great difficulty and labour (for Gibbons was a stout man) they succeeded in carrying the corpse through the wood, back towards the rocks, where they dragged it up from the lower ledge, and threw it down into a set of den, formed by a natural circle of large store, something similar to a Druid's place of socile, but high and class.

And there they left it.

There was still, however, the pool of that, and the trampled marks of the struggle where he had first fallen; but these Schmidt it a great measure effected with his spade, and, strewing dead leaves on the place, it was perfectly concealed; at least as far as they could judge by the moun-light, which had now become faint and dim.

"And now, Captain Vallers," said Schmid, "give me what maney you can space, and is eachange here is the tin case, with the will is it; for, whatever remarkic notions you may have on the subject, I mean to be all farthwith; since this neighbourhood will, I especially recken, soon be too hot to hold me."

a gave him his purse, and took the

box; but asked how he proposed to get away, or whether he did not intend to return with him to D---.

"Not if I can help it," he replied. "Old Gibbons did not come here on foot, I'll be sworn. I am for the horse which neighed some time ago, and which I suspect he must have left in the lane we passed on our right, and so cut through the wood. Curse that lantern! -that was what led him here; though, how he got wind of us, I'm puzzled to tell. But if I cannot find his beast, I'll trouble you to give me a cast in your gig, any way but towards D- So here's to try for it,-I will only beg you to wait ten minutes for my holloa." And flinging the spade into the river which they were still near, he leaped lightly over bush and brier, cleared a low fence, and was quickly lost to view.

Before the ten minutes were expended, Villiers heard the signal, and soon afterwards the noise of a horse's hoofs at a fearful gallop. The sounds grew fainter by degrees, and soon died away in the distance; while the groom, growing desperate for the fate of his master during so prolonged an absence, at length tied the horses to a tree, and went in search of him; but his progress was quickly stopped by the appearance of Villiers, who without speaking got into the gig, and drove from the place of horror.

CHAPTER X.

"Your honor calls you hence;
Therefore be deaf to my unpitied folly,
And all the gods go with you! Upon your sword
Sit laurel'd victory! And smooth success
Be strew'd before your feet!"
SHAKSPEARE.

WE leave the reader's imagination to supply the intermediate progress of Gibbons, his conversation with the groom on the road as he came up with and accosted him, his unexpressed desire to know what the party could want with a spade, and his suspicion, from Schmidt being concerned, that something, in which he had an interest, was most probably connected with the affair; the riding up the narrow lane, leaving his horse there and proceeding across the wood, where he must have been an anxious specialor of Schmidt's employment, while gazing at him from behind the rocks, whose intricate passages and abutments rendered concealment easy.

All this must be left to the reader's penetration.

The possession of the will, or its failure, was life or death to him—at all events to his reputation; and if Schmidt could, at the same time, be safely disposed of, there would be an additional advantage gained; he having so much power over him from the knowledge he was now certain his former clerk possessed of his villany.

It were useless to attempt an exposition of Villiers' thoughts and schemes, on arriving at the Rose and Crown at an early hour in the morning, as, various and conflicting, they whirled through his brain. He would immediately have given information of the last night's events, but for the overwhelming fear of detention from his regiment, which the few, but forcible words of Schmidt had convinced him would be attributed to a cause, too highly coloured with probability to fail of its being adopted by the world, when it was discovered that the possibility had still lain with him of proceeding on foreign service. In fact, a letter reached him, directed, as he had desired, to Mr. Villiers, by that morning's post, and he but gave himself time to swallow a hasty breakfast before he was on his horse, and making towards Burnel Royal.

Villiers rode slowly up towards the magnificent pile, which had been the home of his childhood, which was associated in his mind with the early and most tenderly-cherished recollections of his boyish sports, and of the good old peer whom he had, in a moment of thoughtless intemperance, alienated from him for ever. The woods and shrubberies around had been his familiar haunts, and every part

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of the grounds possessed, with their shade and sunshine, some beloved remembrance.

There stood the splendid baronial residence of an ancient house in its feudal grandeur; for additions made in later reigns had rather enhanced the stateliness of its aspect, while they took nothing from its dignity, although so many different styles and tastes gave it somewhat a heterogeneous appearance. There, might be remarked the mixture of minaret and tower with Gothic arch, and that square ornamented window of spreading space, which told, by its introduction, of civil discord having passed away, and now looked calmly out upon terrace, and stair, and classic urn. The whole structure throwing its darkened side in broad shadow upon gravel and grass, and reflected as a picture in the bosom of the lake beyond, caught the first glance of the approaching stranger.

It was a scene of deep peace, and sunny splendour, such as befitted the mansion of an

English noble. The day was a lovely one, and still May—ripe May; not a breath stirred the leaves of the old trees, or left a ripple on the water: all was calm and silent, but solitary as Eden before man was created.

At length the sounds of opening doors and approaching feet were heard, and Villiers was admitted into the hall, a spacious and lofty chamber, vaulted and fretted, the vast arch supported during its whole length by pillars of alternate polished granite and white marble. The pavement was of mosaic, upon which the sunbeams threw a light of many hues as they streamed through the coloured pane of the large windows, whose tracery, carved in all the way-wardness of the richest fancy, caught and charmed the eye, yet dazzled with its fairy sculpture.

The "bruised arms hung up" around, told of the wars in which former possessors of the then castle had played their parts, and of these iron coats the most conspicuous was one surmounted by a bright steel casque, both of prodigious size, which Oliver, Baron of Beaulieu, had borne to the fight of Agincourt.

The armour, and every part of the hall, seemed lately burnished and retouched; in fact, to Villiers' eye all things bore an appearance of newness which was scarcely in character with their place. The salvage-men too, which had long supported the old quaintly-carved shield that overhung the fire-place, had made room for a new coat of arms in marble, which showed more like some cathedral monument, than the fitting companion for stern-looked morions and plate armour.

The only occupant of the drawing-room, into which he was ushered, happened to be Mrs. Myddleton. Work, however, just left, and a vacant chair which, from its position, seemed lately to have been occupied by her fair companion, to whom the unfinished embroidery

our unless, indeed, he could, wait; that us ter

belonged, led Villiers to believe that she whom he sought had but the instant before quitted her mother's presence.

He was civilly, but coldly received: even this, however, was more than he expected—indeed, more than he wished; for it made communication of the fact which would burst upon her like a thunder-clap, the more difficult, the more harrowing to his mind. But abhorrence of one who could be as guilty as he believed her,—who could, with deliberate ingenuity, defraud him of his right, and keep him in poverty while she revelled in the spoils of his wealth, prevented him from entering into any conversation but such as might lead to the desired object,—an interview with Viola.

She remarked that his regiment was ordered abroad, and that she supposed he was come, with his usual kindness, to take leave of them; that she feared he would not, however, see Mr. Myddleton, as he was gone to the county meeting, unless, indeed, he could wait; that, as for

Viola, poor girl, he would be sorry to hear she was still very delicate; and in fine, that she had begged her to make every apology for not seeing him.

"I trust she will afford me at least five minutes' private conversation."

"I fear it is impossible."

"Allow me at least to hear from herself, madam, that she will not accord me this poor favour. I have much to explain away that she may have mistaken in my conduct, much to say before I leave this country,—to which I may never perhaps return."

"Indeed you must excuse her."

"I cannot, madam, and I will not; for out of this house I do not stir till I have seen her."

Mrs. Myddleton grew alarmed at the sudden warmth and wild manner of Villiers, and was about to rise; but he proceeded.

"Do not oblige me to act in a manner that I wish, if possible, to avoid. I demand but a short private interview with one whom—in fact, madam, grant me this favour quietly, or I may be driven to extremities that will be painful to us both;" and he rang the bell. "Tell Miss Myddleton, Mr. Villiers begs to see her, as he is about to leave England," said he to the servant; and before the lady of the house could interpose, the message was carried.

"At least, then, it must be in my presence," said she, yielding.

"What do you fear?" demanded Villiers.

"Can you not trust your daughter for a few short moments with one who may now see her for the last time?"

"Let it then be for the last time, sir; yet I cannot comprehend what mighty secret you may have to communicate that will not admit of my presence. I will send her to you."

At length appeared the object of his visit, and they were for some seconds folded in each other's embrace. But it was a melancholy meeting. Viola, indeed, looked delicate, yet there was scarcely that difference in her appear-

ance that would greatly have struck an unobservant or casual visitor.

Both were full of explanations, and surmises, and joy, though this was a sad one, if such can be, as Villiers was so soon to depart on a service fraught with peril. Summoning a greater degree of calmness, he demanded her hearing.

"Do not weep, Viola; for now I trust that, although there still hangs a cloud over us, it will, in its own time, clear away; since I am able to see my way more distinctly already."

"What do you allude to?" asked Viola.

"A secret that I wish not, as yet,—indeed I have not courage to tell you,—because, although it must benefit me, and, I hope, lead to our union, it is one that will first cause you much sorrow. But you will recover this, for you have a strong mind, and know that all griefs must have an end."

[&]quot;Yes, in the grave, Charles."

[&]quot;Trust me, I hope long, long before."

^{&#}x27;May I not now know what this is?"

"Nay, do not ask it, Viola. For your sake, and yours only, it should indeed remain a secret for ever, if it were possible; but this cannot be."

"Well, well, I must submit; but oh, Charles, I had so many things to tell you, and now I can scarcely remember one,—they have all gone from my memory; I wonder mind itself remains, indeed: I have had much to try it."

Villiers strained her to his heart, as he again expressed a hope that their sorrows would now soon draw to a close.

"Have I not a fresh one in the danger you will be exposed to?"

That is light; but as I am to leave my country for a space, Viola, and as, in the mean time, your own affairs may be as unsettled as the wind, I am now come for the express purpose of securing your promise that you will be mine, whenever I am in such a situation as to leave no cause, no shadow of reason, for your parents' denying me your hand. Riches were, I believe, the only want ever proved

against me, I shall now have more than enough,—a fortune, Viola, aye as large, nearly, as your father's; and a house that you shall not have reason to complain of as inferior in any one respect to Burnel Royal;—one that even I, sanguine as I am, and covetous, and almost insatiate, where you are concerned, dear Viola, will acknowledge worthy for you to be the mistress of,—not far from hence."

"Lady Wilmington's?"

"Scarcely; but I am trifling away the time," said he, smiling. Yet, with Viola resting upon his arm, and looking in his face with wonder, we cannot blame him if he forgot awhile the importance of the moments that were fast slipping from them. "Yes," continued he, again becoming serious, and grasping her hand in an agitated manner, "I was deficient in money, not in honour. I had rank, or place, if you will, in society,—I had affection for you; but I was disgracefully poor, and consequently an outcast. I know you thought not so;

but then there was that unhappy affair of the drawing-room.—Well, well, hear me, and promise solemnly, now, that you will no longer dally with time, but make me happy in becoming my wife, and the mistress of a fortune equal to the support of such a place as the one that now shelters you."

"A little less violent, Charles !-- I do promise you: yet there is some mystery that I cannot understand."

"You will know all soon. But give me some pledge,—this bracelet," and he unclasped it from her wrist; "and here, take this locket, which contains both our hair, entwined as our hearts, and which has never till this moment quitted mine; and now I depart, satisfied that we have each irrevocably pledged our faith: and mind me, Viola," and he assumed a tone of sternness which alarmed her, "I will require the performance of the vow you have thus virtually made, as fully as if you had plighted me

your troth at the altar; and when we stand together at that holy place, may we each remember this solemn moment, and look back upon the time since passed,—I hope a short one,—with as clear a conscience, and as we shall answer for the violation of our vows at that dreadful day when there shall no longer be a secret unrevealed."

A distant, but long-continued roll of thunder seemed to register their awful compact, and Viola, nervous as she was, sunk terrified into his arms.

Disengaging herself, at length, she was for some minutes seated with her head resting upon her clasped hands, supported by a table, in tears and silence, which Villiers himself felt too much agitated to interrupt, when a servant entered to say that her mistress was suddenly taken ill, and desired Miss Myddleton's immediate presence.

Viola started up, putting back her hair which had fallen over her eyes and shoulders in disorder; but she seemed so completely bewildered as scarcely to comprehend the message. The servant withdrew.

Villiers thought to tell her of the unhappy adventure of the past night, but the words refused to come at his bidding; and after several ineffectual efforts, he resigned the attempt.

"And now dearest, dearest Viola," said he,
once and for all—farewell;—may you—"
He could proceed no further, for utterance was
completely choked: he clasped her hand, relinquished it, and turned away.

Viola moved in the opposite direction; but she had scarcely reached the door, when she looked back on one in whom heart and soul were wrapped,—on one whom, it might be, she now saw the last time, for ever. The feeling and the action were mutual, and they rushed into each other's arms:—a sob, and a burst away, and they had parted.

A thunder-storm seemed evidently coming on with violence; but this was perhaps more in

accordance with his present state of mind, than the dead sultry calm which had attended his approach to Burnel. His horses were immediately ordered.

Slowly, after the first few miles, which were performed at a gallop, he directed his course upon the metropolis, where, arrived, he at once put unhesitatingly into the hands of solicitors of great reputation, the will of Lord Beaulieu, carefully abstaining from any communication with his late lordship's law-advisers, but giving his own full power to confer with them, should they see necessary, during his absence abroad. He required also, that all possible delicacy and concealment from public notoriety should be observed with regard to the Myddletons, and enjoined that they should use every endeavour to prevent the necessity of a law-suit being had recourse to,-a line of conduct that was only to be adopted in case of a refusal to give up the property and arrears.

It was also necessary, as he was about to

proceed on a service of danger, that a will of his own should be drawn up, having in view the accession to his grandfather's property; and, providing for the payment of Schmidt, a few minor legacies, and one of considerable magnitude to Thornhill, were all of which mention was made; the residue being left without reserve to Viola.

The death of Gibbons, which under such circumstances as it occurred, most painfully weighed upon his mind, was concealed from all. It was indeed his intention, as he had declared, to make public the whole proceeding upon his return from abroad.

In the mean while he received, and he wished for, no intelligence of Schmidt. He would gladly have consulted with Ludlow, but the time was too short.

And now the most unpleasant part of his duty remained, namely, the breaking to the Myddletons the present and approaching state of affairs. Willingly would he, for Viola's sake, have buried the whole in oblivion, could he, in so doing, have attained to the property; but this was impossible.

A letter was therefore written to his great aunt, to inform her that he had become, no matter how, possessed of the will, which would be forthwith proved; and to prepare her for the results. To her husband, as proprietor of the estates, was sent another letter; and having with infinitely more vexation, perplexity, and trouble than we have attempted to express, made the several necessary arrangements, he proceeded to Harwich, whither the regiment had already marched.

Were the which around the ling of room policitant than the which around the departure of a gain last body of non for the hands-field from whenevers can tell how many abadi return? Wentmand, a like that of the branch trampet,—what-orders what antiquation does it not enough. However, what antiquation does it not enough homes!

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CHAPTER XI.

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A lotter was the wave owners to his great."

"Sleep, soldier!—let thy mother wait
To hear thy trumpet on the blast;
Thy dog, perchance, may find the gate,
And bid her come to thee at last;
He cannot tell a sadder tale
Than did thy clarion on the gale,
When last—and far away—she heard its lingering
echoes fail!"

sums to more the true be an

THE DEAD TRUMPETER.

be-my directivated;

What circumstance more thrilling or more noble than that which attends the departure of a gallant body of men for the battle-field, from whence who can tell how many shall return? What music is like that of the brazen trumpet,—what ardour, what enthusiasm does it not create? How magnificent a spectacle a large body of horse;

and how melancholy a void does not its parting leave in the hearts of many!

Sad were the feelings of Caroline Thornhill, as she beheld the march of the Life Guards; and in fancied sounds her ear still drank the dying wail of their glorious but sad music. They had departed, and left the future all a blank. Never, never more, perhaps, her prophetic soul, it might be vainly told her, she would behold father, or him she dared not tell she loved.

The regiment had arrived at the point of embarkation but the day before Villiers joined. He rode hard to save his distance, for great events were on the wing; one day might prove fatal to fame, and equally so to liberty. Glad was he, then, after a long and weary ride, to find himself once more amongst his brother officers, at the inn where they had established themselves.

It was evening, his dinner concluded, and his claret tasting peculiarly grateful from the previous fatigue. He might be admiring the long slender glass which contained it; or perhaps his

ideas were far otherwise directed, when Whitecote, with a paper before him, at once broke forth :- " ' Horrible murder near D ... ' Why that's the town you were at the other day, Villiers, is it not?—at least the Colonel's letter was-yes; it was directed there. Had this been heard of then? By gad, here's a description of the supposed murderers; and," added he, laughing, "one of them is decidedly like yours :-'Young man, with dark brown hair, dark eyes, stands about five feet nine or ten, good looking! -Nay, there all comparison ends-'a mole or spot on the left cheek." Villiers felt himself blush. "' By gad, it must be you!' said Whichcote, more seriously,-" and stopped at the-What inn did you stop at?"

"The Lamb," replied he, recollecting Schmidt's hostelry.

Whichcote, with his usual obtuseness—" devilish extraordinary, though—' two horses and a groom

slender glass which communed it; or perhaps his

-body found in the wood, much mangled,pearl-handled knife, with the initials C. V. on the handle.' By gad, this is very extraordinary, Charles!'

"Hush!" said Villiers, as Whichcote proceeded to read the description of Schmidt, for the apprehension of whom, and his companion, a hundred pounds reward were offered, and a little lower down, on the same paper, the name of Villiers and Schmidt at full length inserted, as the suspected parties. "Hush!—come into my room, and I will rely on your honour not to let what I shall tell you go further,—and here, give me that paper," which he unceremoniously put in the fire. The rest of the officers had, before this, dropped off to their several beds, and fortunately the two colloquists were alone in the room.

Whichcote did violence to his feelings, and for once kept his tongue from babbling the secret confided to him. The next morning at day-light the regiment embarked on board the transports provided for them; and after a prosperous voyage, arrived at Ostende.

END OF VOL. II.



VILLIERS.



LONDON:
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Duke-Street, Lambeth.



VILLIERS:

A Tale

OF

THE LAST CENTURY.

"He may worthfly, and with honour, bear the cinquebil.' $\label{eq:GUILLIM} \textit{Guillim}.$

VOLUME III.

LONDON:

WHITTAKER AND CO., AVE-MARIA LANE.

1835.

which they have with precise formality been duly lopped, is the most striking part of their pretensions,—all these render one mile of road a specimen of the remainder, perhaps for seventy or eighty.

Why do the spires attract? Because they remind us so forcibly of the pictures by all the Flemish and Dutch masters. You have Cuyp, you have Rubens, you have Teniers, and a hundred others before you in imagination. You are struck, upon viewing the country they have drawn from, with the calm, the peaceful, the happy enjoyment of a country life, for which a race of boors, one generation the counterpart of that which preceded it, has, during so many centuries, been pre-eminently distinguished.

It is a great mistake to suppose that they want war. They are the natural children of the soil, and the tillers of the ground which sire and grandsire tilled before them; and could they keep foreign armies from their country, and be themselves kept free from the taint of city tur-

VILLIERS.

CHAPTER I.

"But lo! a Teniers woos, and not in vain,
Your eyes to revel in a livelier sight,
His bell-mouthed goblet makes me feel quite Danish,
Or Dutch with thirst—What, ho!—A flask of Rhenish."

Byron.

THERE is one object which attracts, and which takes from the dull disinterest of the scenery in travelling through the west of Flanders, or, as we now term it by its ancient name, Belgium. This is the light, peculiar, and elegant church spire which in so many places presents itself to the view. The long, long tiring line of straight road, the universal flatness, the trees so nearly related to each other, that the family likeness into

weary march. What anguish, what excitement, what courage, what terror, have not all these places known! Even the mind of the great Marlborough we may—visionary but pleasing contemplation—fancy ourselves inspecting, as he lays the plan for some siege which is to change in its effects the whole face of affairs,—it may be, terminate a campaign by a single blow. And later yet, England, for ever doomed to spill her blood where war's note is loudest, has given us in the remembrance of red Water-loo the picture of some dear relative left mangled on these plains, or groaning in his agony along these causeways. But let this pass awhile, and allow Flanders to rest in peace.

Little thought Villiers of its spires or its pictures, except when the former, as we have surmised, might have told him of the approaching conclusion to a weary march; or the latter with their sparkling goblets, high brimming with some grateful liquor, were brought to his memory by the parched lip and burning throat. He had ample food for memory, for deep thought, and those feelings of the heart which none can tell how painfully it throbs with; or can but know by its sad index that some deep seated canker dwells beneath.

How, he thought, must his reputation now be suffering in England, branded as a murderer, had his identity been discovered! What would be the feelings of Viola, when she heard the dreadful news;—would she believe him innocent till proved guilty, which could never be; or would she, receiving the horrid intelligence, with all its added blackness of description, discard him from her heart, and renounce the obligation he had so solemnly administered to her?

And now, since the glad truth of a will's existence in his favour had burst upon him, had he adopted that line of action which would most readily conduce to his happiness? "Strange," says some author, "that while we pretend happiness to be the object of all desire, it should be

the last thing which we really covet. Love, and wealth, and pleasure, and honour,—these are the roads which we take—so long, that accustomed to the mere travel, we forget that it was but undertaken, not for the course, but the goal; and in the common infatuation which pervades all our race, we make the toil the meed, and in following the means, forsake the end."

It was a strange intermixture of these that now urged Villiers on; if indeed that could be said to urge, which would not allow him to decline adopting the path that the power of circumstance continually opened before him. As for military ambition, military renown, perhaps there never was a man so eminently qualified to grasp its laurels, who so indifferently trod the road to fame.

The figures which filled up the forground of this pictures would be been anythin uputed while realight glinted with a reacting splendour.

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EAW II MAI BEST CHAPTER II.

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a continually owned before him. As

" Let them come:

They come like sacrifices in their trim,
And to the fire-eyed maid of smoky war,
All hot and bleeding will we offer them:
The mailed Mars shall on his altar sit
Up to the ears in blood. I am on fire
To hear this rich reprisal is so nigh,
And yet not ours."

SHAKSPEARE.

THE beams of the rising sun lit up the varied scenery of a fine landscape, and diffused a red and misty glory over its hill and dale, giving the whole a rich Claude-like effect, enhanced by the brightness of running water.

The figures which filled up the foreground of this picture were a body of heavy cavalry, against whose cuirasses the sunlight glinted with a dazzling splendour. The trumpets sounded a point of war, and the regiment quickened its pace into a trot; while many a steed bounded beneath the young and gay cavalier, the champed bitt but ill restraining its courage against a sharp and insidious spur.

The troops in question were the King of England's Life Guards, on their route to join the army under the Earl of Stair; and now in the progress of their last day's march, panting with anxiety, lest from the known proximity of the adverse parties a battle should even then take place before they could come up to share it.

The French army, under the Maréchal Duc tle Noailles, occupied the opposite bank of the river Maine, which the Life Guards now skirted, in number far exceeding that of the English and their allies.

Lord Stair, whose experience in the art of war had been gained under Prince Eugene, had no desire to try the hazardous experiment of a precipitate battle before Prince Charles of Lorraine could join him. To facilitate such a movement, he pushed forward on the left bank of the Maine; but the presence of the French army at length obliged him to halt, in a position where supplies were so difficult to be obtained, that his army ran the risk of starving, unless some favourable event should enable them to elude the enemy's vigilance, and decamp silently, or the junction of some large body of allies should take place.

At this time there were about twelve thousand Hanoverians and Hessians shut up in Hanau, a town on the Maine, above Frankfort, from whence they were as unable to debouche, as Lord Stair to succeed in joining them.

There might be a few veterans in this army, who with Stair had witnessed the glories of Blenheim, and the slaughter of Malplaquet; but none of these counselled the risking a battle with an enemy so superior, both as to physique and morale.

The French had the recollection of old Maréchel Villars, and many more brilliant gene-

rals fresh in their minds; while, except a small proportion of veterans, their adversaries were a generation removed from the spirit-stirring times of the great duke. Moreover, the arms of France had too lately acquired great renown, to be much affected by their reverses in Bohemia. Those of England, on the contrary, had either rested in supineness, or what was infinitely worse for the military spirit, had been vainly employed upon expeditions equally misconducted and unfortunate; and had thus been taught to doubt that superiority in the field which older soldiers had with justice made their boast. Add to this, that by an unaccountable want of foresight at the head of affairs, the allied army was placed in so desperate a position, that famine and consequent ruin threatened them with distended jaws. To remain where he was, or, by moving, to hazard a battle, were measures which seemed at first view equally fraught with evil; yet it cannot be denied, that with the chance, remote as it was, of being joined by an additional body

of troops, Lord Stair was right to temporize to the very utmost limit that the present stores of his army would permit; and the Duke d'Aremberg, who commanded the Austrian allies, it is to be supposed acquiesced in this measure.

But Prince Charles had to contend with the Maréchal de Coigny in Alsace; and it was not probable that he would with impunity be allowed to pass the Rhine.

The Earl of Stair had, then, at first encamped near Killenbach, between the Maine and the forest of D'Armstadt. Hence he moved to Aschaffenburg, with a view of securing the navigation of the Upper Maine, but found himself anticipated by the vigilance and activity of the enemy; the Duc de Noailles, posted on the opposite bank of the river, having already got possession of the principal posts, so as to cut off all supplies from that quarter.

The allies numbered about forty thousand men, British, Hanoverians, and Austrians—the French sixty thousand. And now, having given this short review of the military aspects of the period, in this precise quarter of Europe, and thus refreshed the memory of my readers, I take leave to return to the Life Guards, a gallant corps, which arriving fresh from England, it may be supposed would prove a welcome acquisition to Lord Stair.

The heavy cavalry still retained the cuirass at the time of which we speak, 1743; and indeed it seems extraordinary that this eminently serviceable piece of armour should ever have fallen into disuse. Yet the strange mixture of the useful and the cumbrous, the warlike and the foppish, in the soldier's dress of the period, raise wonder in the more modern warrior, that armies could have endured the campaigns, and fought the battles they did, for so many years of high achievement, without the monstrous inconvenience and absurdity of some part of their equipment suggesting itself to those who had the management of military affairs.

But fashion and custom, more arbitrary than

any other rulers, exacted from the soldier conformity to their laws, however cold, heat, or fatigue might induce the rebellious thought to rise, or the arrogant assumption of ability, on the part of an officer, to improve upon the quaint attire with which he was invested.

"Caroline would be a useful aide-de-camp, sir," remarked Villiers, who was now doing Major's duty; the first of these officers having been promoted to the command of a regiment previously to the Life Guards leaving England, and the second, conveniently enough for our friend, falling sick of a fever at Ghent.

Thornhill, as he threw from him the torn and stained ruffle which had produced the remark, smiled at this allusion to his daughter, but more from courtesy than pleasure; for he thought of the isolated situation in which she would be left did the chance of war take from her his protection.

"If she was with us," continued Villiers, in an under tone to Bohun, "I think the Colonel would have many applications to be admitted of the Staff, one, certainly :- what think you?"

Bohun turned away his head.

But Villiers maliciously ran on in the same strain, seeking, perhaps, to distract his own thoughts from other things which they had but too much dwelt on of late. Besides, he would infinitely rather talk of a lovely girl like Miss Thornhill, than of the approaching service in which they expected to be engaged. He had never been under fire, it is true; yet he felt not that anxious mounting of the expectant heart, which the more youthful Lieutenant near him might be supposed to know, on entering upon a campaign which was possibly to induct him to his first of fields.

If those, however, who beheld the countenance of Bohun, on the day the regiment marched from London, had decided that a thirst for glory alone occupied his soul, they must have been strangely devoid of penetration. Caroline Thornhill was ever present to his mind's eye; and regret at leaving her mastered every other feeling.

The first remark of Villiers had called up reflections in the two friends near him, which, though each was actuated by affection, resulted from very different springs of kindness. The Colonel's sigh was that of an old man sorrowing for the imagined future orphanage of his daughter, should fate chance his death; the other, whose full heart still swelled nigh to bursting with regret at having parted from a beloved object, and heaved with the memory of all the happy moments he had passed with her, thought little of military fame: indeed, if the truth must be told, as Villiers went on with his badinage, he fairly gave him and the regiment, perhaps the whole army, to the devil; and desired no greater share of good than what might result from turning his horse's head that moment, and gaining once more the road which led to Caroline's present home near Windsor.

"Pleasant, eh, Bohun, to be there now?" said Villiers, as if he read his thoughts. "So infinitely preferable to these confounded long

gret at leaving her mantered every pilou deling.

dusty marches! Only fancy the 19th of June—to-day—how agreeable to be in the Park, riding with her; or walking in Kensington Gardens; or about the grounds of Windsor; and then the good dinner afterwards—for you'll get none to-day, or perhaps to-morrow; there's a wondrous paucity of provisions with the army."

"What do you say," demanded Thornhill, "about the army?"

"That I hear they have adopted a new fashion,—they don't dine."

"Then they must fight," said the Colonel, gaily.

"I wish you had heard Serjeant Whitby's pithy remark on that subject," replied Villiers.

"About an Englishman and a bellyful, I suppose," said the Colonel; "but that is always their cry, the clods,—for ever grumbling."

"It is the nature of an empty stomach," said Villiers.

"Why, my Major! I think you seem in-

clined to head the conspiracy. What is that you say, Bohun?"

"He remarks how disagreeable a place Windsor is for a quarter," said the Major for the time being.

"It may appear so to him," returned Thornhill, believing this statement: "he has his glory before him; and so it ought to all of us," he continued in a quicker and altered tone, "compared with what we have in sight!"

And he pointed to the English army as it lay encamped beneath them, some three or four miles off, as they judged by the bird's-eye view from the hill they had just crested. It was a splendid prospect, and had a corresponding effect on the hearts of all as they caught a first glimpse of what moved their Colonel. Now all was fire and gladness. A sudden change had come over the spirits of the men, and, in the anticipation of soon joining the multitude beneath, they forgot their fatigue,—their thirst,—

Were a Major I think you seem or

every thing, in fact, but the esprit du corps which told them that of this immense body they should be the élite.

The Adjutant now galloped up, and pointed out the enemy's camp.

"Where?" eagerly demanded Bohun, straining his eyes, and rising in his stirrups to catch the first view in his life of a hostile army; and as his eyes, following the direction of the Adjutant's finger, at length rested upon the desired object, he experienced that feeling of excitement which none but the youthful warrior can ever know.

A long-drawn unconscious sigh escaped him, but it was not one of fear; there might be anxiety, but it was mixed with delight; there was a sensation of awe and admiration that gave birth to it; and his countenance, the index of his mind, became quickly radiant with a pleased, but indefinable expression.

Thornhill now drew off to the side, and

scanned the appearance of each man as he passed, with the eye of a keen soldier, and again riding to the front, gave the word to trot. But although they had accomplished a long march since morning, there was little occasion for this order; since every man, as he rose the hill, and from its brow caught a glimpse of the camp beyond, had unconsciously quickened his pace, while a brightened glance shot from his eye, and some apposite remark was addressed to his comrade.

They had soon drawn near enough to distinguish the sounds which the great concourse before them sent forth. Suddenly a loud cheer resounded from one side of the camp to the other, and from end to end; another followed, and another, while "God save the King" rose upon the air from the different regimental bands, mingled with the glad trumpets of the cavalry.

"It is His Majesty!" exclaimed Thornhill, his face beaming with exultation and loyalty.

VILLIERS.

The cheers were quickly taken up by the advancing corps their trumpets sounded, the spurs were pressed their horses' sides, and, enveloped I of dust, the Life Guards joined the Earl of Stair.

The best (Lower and)

The cheurs were quickly inken up by the above our corps, their trainpen sonadar, the spure were present against their horses ades and, our object in a cloud of dust, the Life

TOTAL CHAPTER HIS Contag director

"The hum of either army stilly sounds, That the fixed sentinels almost receive The secret whispers of each other's watch:

The armourers, accomplishing the knights, Give dreadful note of preparation.

Proud of their numbers, and secure in soul, The confident and over-lusty French

Do the low-rated English play at dice; And chide the cripple tardy-gaited night Who, like a foul and ugly witch, doth limp So tediously away."

SHARSPEARE.

Ir was, indeed, the King, who had just reached the camp, accompanied by the Duke of Cumberland and Lord Carteret; and Stair took an early opportunity of presenting Colonel Thornhill to His Majesty, after the arrival of the Life Guards. George, we have already said, was no stranger to the merits of this valuable officer, and the smallness of his staff induced him to name the Colonel to a distinguished place about the royal person. The command of the regiment, therefore, devolved upon Villiers, who, proud as he well might be of the charge, roused himself from his indifference, and gave every mark of able qualification for the arduous duty he had to perform.

The Sovereign, if not the ostensible, had already taken the virtual command of the army; while Stair, responsible, as he believed, for all bad results of precipitate conduct, could scarcely expect more than a limited share of whatever laurels might be in store for the greatest names now combined with its achievements.

To say that he was vexed, would be applying a faint term to the feelings he experienced, when, in the council immediately summoned by George, who bore down all opposition, it was determined to leave their present ground, and push for Hanau with all convenient speed. Here the King resolved to wait his other Allies, and, if possible, avoid a battle before that junction was accomplished.

Although this is not a professed history of the period, yet it may be as well to say a few words upon the position of affairs at so critical a juncture.

Hanover and its defence, during the greater part of the last century, formed a sufficient pretext for the interference of England with all continental quarrels; but it is natural to suppose that, in the time of the two first Georges, it was looked upon by those Sovereigns with eyes of endearment and affection, which reserved for it a place equal, if not superior, to that of Britain in the Monarch's heart; and the jealousy that this excited in the people of England, was equal to the dissatisfaction with which they saw the continental system still pursued, and witnessed the long absences of their King in his foreign dominions.

Happily for the oppressed Colonies of the

West Indies, Sir Robert Walpole was minister no more, and for them there was a hope dawning that Spanish cruelty and aggression would be effectually arrested; but his successor, Lord Carteret, in his continental policy, contrary to the expectations which had been formed of him from the violence of his speeches before taking office, had shown every disposition to plunge deeply into the wars of Europe, and thereby cater to the ambitious and military disposition of his Sovereign; -a disposition which, however pacific his own wishes, Walpole had never summoned sufficient firmness to resist. And now it appeared that the ruinous effusion of blood and treasure which had marked the early part of the eighteenth century, was to be continued with an equally lavish hand.

It will seem hard upon the two last-named Sovereigns that the additional sins, glorious as they were, of the time of Anne, should be brought in judgment upon them; yet was there now the brilliant reputation, the inflexi-

bility of Marlborough, the judicious mind of Godolphin, to steer the vessel of the state through the numerous difficulties which beset it? These had waned, and the glittering bubble of those splendid victories, which cost the country so much, had now burst, leaving to the present nothing but an empty recollection of past fame, and the vastness of an appalling debt, which the last necessity alone should have tempted the ministry to increase.

The people now became clamorous for a change of policy, which, without involving a compromise of the national honour, might, by a course of salutary and peaceful measures, tend to heal the wounds which so long a continuance of agitation had laid bare. But Lord Carteret seemed utterly to have discarded all recollection of his former professions, and entered, as we have stated, into the warlike views of George with all the readiness that could be desired.

The Queen of Hungary, however successful her arms had of late been, knew the value of vol. III. English aid too well to rest secure upon her own resources, or those of her nearer and more natural allies alone. Her recent misfortunes had not been effaced by the later successes she had experienced over the French, and her application for succour from the King of Great Britain was quickly responded to by the landing of an army, which, we now find, after wintering in Flanders, encamped on the west bank of the Maine.

All further delay was prevented by the sudden arrival of George; and Lord Stair found himself, perhaps against his will and better judgment, about to be extricated from the dilemma in which he was so unfortunately placed,—a situation that, by the Duc de Noailles, was confidently looked upon as likely to prove the Furcæ Caudinæ of the allied army.

The command of the latter seemed now to have devolved upon a Dictator, timely arrived to save the host from destruction. Whether this was a view that Stair took of the proceedings, it would not, perhaps, be difficult to say. Hazardous as every movement must be, and desperate as were their affairs, it must be confessed that the talents of a Cincinnatus or a Camillus were apparently necessary to bring them well through the danger that beset them.

It appears that the French had been allowed with impunity to throw bridges across the Maine, and take up positions which might have been disputed, from whence they threatened to annoy the allies on the slightest demonstration of a movement. But the admirable constitution of the Earl's mind was such, whatever his oversights might have been, and how bitterly galled soever he may have felt at thus virtually losing command of his army, that no word escaped him, no sign was visible in which enemy or friend could have read disappointment or vexation.

Orders had overnight been given to strike the tents at a certain hour. Before day dawned, therefore, the camp had broken up, and in deep

silence the army commenced its march. the allies were in the neighbourhood of a w ful and intelligent foe, quick to percein, ulert to take advantage of each manœure the adverse party; and as the mists rolled an before the rising sun, a column of the French army was perceived in motion, and a short space after, a second one.

The route of the allies lay between very high ground and the river, and the enemy's artiller was soon brought to bear upon them from the opposite side. There was no avoiding this fire, till the widening of the river and the plain, after some time, placed them out of range. The British artillery was in the mean time placed in position opposite to one battery, which it had the effect of silencing: Noailles made his dispositions for battle with great judgment. Throwing large bodies of troops across the river, by the undisputed bridges with which the French had previously accommodated themselves, he ordered one corps to take possession of Dettingen.

in front of the allies, while another in their rear occupied Aschaffenburg, so lately abandoned. The Duc de Grammont, with the princes of the blood, and all the young noblesse, at the head of an immense body of cavalry, was posted near a defile, and especially directed to defend it. He had the support of various masses of infantry; an arm, of which the French had too great impetuosity to know the value on that day, or to reap all its available benefits.

The allies were now upon the open plain, expecting an attack from several quarters. The British and Hanoverian infantry, with the exception of a few detached regiments, had been halted and formed by George in person, who, with great animation, exhorted them to their duty; riding between the lines with his sword drawn, and encouraging all by his demeanour and example. The presence of the Sovereign was not without its effect upon the men, who showed in their rigid countenances a determination to fight to the last extremity. Their

situation was indeed nearly desperate; but themselves were indomitably firm.

Lord Stair was in another part of the field, conspicuously mounted on a beautiful grey galloway of his own rearing, and broke by himself. A division of infantry and the greater part of the cavalry were yet to be advantageously disposed. His was no enviable situation, well may we think! In his rear was a large force, ready to take advantage of whatever might befal-on his flank masses of infantry were advancing, with the apparent intention of crossing the river to attack them, - and in front hovered a countless host of cavalry, eager to charge his as yet incomplete array. Each minute of time was worth treasures of diamonds And what was his relation to George? He, so late the chief, was now but his lieutenant. Obliged to subscribe to the dictates of his Sovereign, yet, knowing that he only was aware of the state of all the troops, and upon which particular corps the greatest reliance could be

placed, there was that disheartening influence to contend with, which required the exertion of all his energies, even had he been strung with nerves of iron. The King, meanwhile, as he rode slowly from square to square, with the young Duke of Cumberland by his side, knew the keen eye of a soldier towards the enemy's cavalry, nor was it long before he perceived the expected demonstration. They were forming for a charge! On they came, with a furious impetuosity that threatened to sweep the infantry from the earth. It was an awful, a tremendous moment for the young soldier. The ground trembled under their horses' feet, and a noise like continual thunder reverberated from each stroke; the clatter of their arms, mingled with the hellish scream peculiar to the French, and the grim-looked cuirassiers galloped fiercely up to the squares, or rather deep masses, which stood ready to receive them. But with undaunted resolution did the infantry sustain that charge, and with admirable steadiness did they

execute the orders which had been given them. A hazardous manœuvre was put in practice, but succeeded perfectly. As had been preconcerted, the masses suddenly opened to the right and left, and admitting the headlong tide again closed, pouring in such a murderous and continued fire, that the whole body of horse was quickly thrown into confusion. Steady and firm as a rock, they presented now no opening; and the Duc de Grammont seeing his best troops fall slaughtered by hundreds, drew off all he could, rallied, and re-formed. Too late he was aware of his error; yet he had not solely his own impetuosity to strive against; but that of princes and young generals, all, with their men, thirsting for the combat. He had left the defile unguarded-Stair saw the movement, and hastened to reap its promised advantages. Instantly he perceived the importance of possessing this pass, and despatched a regiment of sharpshooters to line its sides, supported by guns and cavalry: these were the Life Guards and the King's dragoons; the latter commanded by Colonel Gayton, who bowed with scrupulous ceremony as Villiers drew the regiment up on his right. Noailles, who had, after making his dispositions, repassed the Maine, beheld the movement of Grammont with frantic grief. He quickly brought the remainder of his forces over, and attacked the King with all arms. The artillery made great havoc; but the French were in their turn charged by cavalry before they could form, and suffered in greater proportion. All attempts to regain their position at the pass were now unavailing; the sharp-shooters picked off the cavalry that advanced with the greatest impunity; and as they ceased, the Life Guards charged and drove them.

Lord Stair was in all parts of the field wherever his presence could be of most service; but fresh troops marching to the attack of the pass, he impressed the King with the necessity of strengthening their force in that quarter, and returned thither. George furnished a few regiments of infantry, with great reluctance; and no sooner had he lent them (for he considered these all as his particular property), than they were recalled. But the Earl was not on this occasion blessed with a peculiarly quick sense of hearing, and the troops were kept.

The King had repulsed the attacking columns of Noailles, but dared not move from his position. Exposed to a numerous artillery and a hail-storm of musketry, he exhibited such gallant bearing, that in imitation of his example all seemed inspired with a like enthusiasm.

The French were driven back, and several guns taken; but the Maréchal prepared for another attack. Aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp was despatched to demand assistance from Stair.

"My lord," said Thornhill,—for he was now bearer of the message,—" His Majesty desires you will send all the infantry to his support, and likewise draw off the guns from the defile, which he requires immediately."

"Tell the King," replied Lord Stair, biting

his nether lip with vexation, "that I can neither spare man nor gun."

"Am I to give this message to His Majesty?" demanded Thornhill.

"You have my reply. This is no time for ceremony. Moreover, I am in want of support myself. Make my respects," continued Lord Stair; "and say that the enemy's cavalry must be destroyed before I can send a man from this point."

The threatened attack of the Maréchal had taken place. Some English regiments of cavalry had given way before the rallied squadrons of cuirassiers, who fought as if upon the exertions of each arm hung the fate of France.

De Grammont, anxious to atone for his indiscretion, seemed gifted with ubiquity. He was now here, now there,—now forming his discomfited squadrons, and leading them on,—now covering the retreat of infantry, or defending abandoned guns.

Nor was the King of England less active. Thornhill found him in the midst of broken cavalry, trying to re-form them. Enveloped in smoke, his voice drowned by the thunder of cannon and the cries around, his long false hair singed up to the ears, his cuirass so bright before, now blued and tarnished with fire, his eyes nearly starting from his head, and rowels buried deep in the flanks of his second horse, he had more the appearance of an incarnate devil than a human being. Despair had almost taken possession of him, as he saw fall by his side the flower of his cavalry, and the officers to whom he was most attached. Rage, at the intemperate reply of the Earl, was soon, however, the overruling impulse of his breast. He raved in the madness of passion; and turning to a Hanoverian officer, cried, "Stolzenaw, desire Lord Stair to move his whole force here, instantlyinstantly! And if he demurs, attach him of high treason, - arrest him on the spot. You, Sir Colonel!" continued the King, turning to Thornhill,-" Who commands the Life Guards at the defile?"

"Captain Villiers, your Majesty."

"Captain? Captain?" roared George. "A Captain in command of my Life Guards on such a day as this?"

Thornhill would have explained, but the King thrust his hand before his mouth. "Fly, sir," said he; "order him here on the instant with his regiment; if he demurs, shoot him.—Away!"

Stair was in the act of receiving a charge of cavalry, when Baron Stolzenau, his English deserting him at the moment most required, rode up to the opposite face of the square into which the Earl had thrown himself, and where, surrounded by the bristling bayonets of the undaunted men who formed it, he sat on his horse, unmoved as a statue. The torrent of German which the Baron poured forth, had as little effect upon him as the furious charge that the still powerful body of horse immediately afterwards directed upon his soldiers. As for the hapless Stolzenau himself, a ball from the mus-

ket of a young soldier in the square, who mistook him for a French officer, soon put him to silence, and the Baron fell to the earth, covered with glory.

Slight chance, indeed, was there of gaining attention from the Earl, even had he lived; for on the failure of the charge, and the consequent roll of the musketry which succeeded, the English Marshal was energetic as he had before been immoveable, and in the smoke and confusion, suddenly disappeared to another part of the field.

Meanwhile Thornhill had met with more success, and a ready auditor in Villiers, who, after his charge, had remained inactive, and was ordered by Lord Stair on no account to move from his position. He believed the King's command, however, to supersede all others, and required no second orders to withdraw. At a gallop, then, the Life Guards advanced to that part of the ground where the Sovereign had been left by Thornhill, and not without

the loss of some men by the way, halted on his left.

The battle was, ere this, decided; yet, as a last effort, the French infantry were in the act of deploying for a general advance in line, when Villiers received his orders from the King. The regiment wheeled up with beautiful precision, and charged with great vigour. The enemy attempted suddenly to form a hollow square*, but, before the manœuvre was complete, the cavalry were amongst them. Thornhill rallied some broken squadrons, and brought them also up, while, at a gallop, came to their support the King's dragoonst, which had been colleagued with the Life Guards at the defile, Colonel Gayton, who commanded, supposing, or choosing to suppose, that the royal order must include him also. The consequence of this desertion

^{*} Fact.

[†] This regiment, according to the official returns, seems to have suffered immensely while maintaining their position at the gorge, having lost (men and officers) 38 killed, and 86 wounded; (horses) 141 killed, and 50 wounded.

of his assigned post was the capture of all the guns, and the sudden flight of the sharpshooters, which Lord Stair just arrived near the spot in time to behold.

But the effect of this charge turned the day in favour of the allies. The enemy had no time to form, and the cavalry, pouring in upon their confused and broken ranks, committed such terrible havoc that the rout in that quarter was complete. The fatal cry of "Sauce qui peut* I" spread like wildfire, and the French infantry were quickly mingled in a general flight.

But the English cavalry had yet work before them, although the King had ridden up to Villiers and staid the pursuit. Indeed, besides His Majesty's injunctions, or what might have been the effect of Ludlow's, had his words been remembered, there was a more crying necessity in self-preservation; for the gallant

^{*} Historical.

Duc de Grammont once more led his remnants to the charge. Against the Life Guards was the whole of his force directed. For an instant the British gave way, and many men and horses were ridden over or cut down; but other squadrons coming to their support, the mêlée became general, and a short, though brilliant conflict was the result.

In this affair the Sovereign was a spectator, but he seemed to bear some charm about him that warded off steel and ball. The gallant Thornhill had left his side, and mingled with his old comrades, while Villiers and the Duc de Grammont met hand to hand. Perfect master of his sword and horse, each party seemed on a par with the other; and so great an interest did this momentary combat create, that, for the time, all in the vicinity seemed to leave the decision of the day to their chiefs. By a descending cut of the huge cavalry sword of Villiers, De Grammont's blade was shivered to

the hilt. His generous adversary dropped his point, but was immediately wounded by a pistol ball from some unknown hand, which, entering beneath his cuirass at the shoulder, was, however, too slight an affair to be taken notice of amidst the heat of action. At the same moment a French officer spurred between the Duke and his foe; and while De Grammont was by others hurried from the spot, the Gaul found himself a prisoner in the hands of Colonel Gayton, who had dashed into the conflict.

The French were in full retreat. The Duke, collecting the remnant of his Horse, precipitately left the field, and the allies forebore to pursue.

While this was achieving in one part, what were Lord Stair's feelings upon discovering that the post he had ordered to be so carefully guarded had been left by the troops to whom he had committed its charge! He demanded the meaning from an officer of the sharpshooters. The word had been caught up from the Life

Guards: "It was the King's order!" Stair was frantic; the sides of the pass became quickly covered with French Tirailleurs, the guns were deserted, the British fled,—the day was lost, and all retreat cut off; so thought the Earl: but instantly leaving a spot where his presence could be of no further use, and galloping towards the centre, he perceived the turn affairs had taken; and the French had hardly commenced crossing the river when the defile was once more deserted by its last occupants, who, after showing the greatest gallantry in the battle, seemed resolved not to be left behind in the flight.

As the panic-struck host crowded upon the bridges in their anxiety to place the river between themselves and the heavy horse of the allies, one of these temporary fabrics gave way, and its burthen was instantly precipitated into the Maine, while breathless thousands still flocked to the ruined bridge despairing, or sought a ford higher up. A short, but slaughtering cannon-

ade added to their panic; but the opportunity that here presented its-10-10 lestroying the French army, or renderin rviceable for the rest of that campaign, was wed by the King of England to slip dist by.

old which to their part; has the opportunity that here presented their of destroying the Present one of the control of the con

CHAPTER IV.

"Struck with no false alarms,

Each house its home-felt sorrow knows,

Each bleeding heart is pierced with keenest woes;

When for the hero sent to share

The glories of the crimson war,

Nought save his arms, stained with their master's gore,

And his cold ashes reach the shore."

AGAMEMNON OF ÆSCH. POTTER'S TRANS.

THE day was to the allies.

It had been a hard, but scarcely could be styled a well-fought field.

Courage did not appear to be on either side wanting; conduct was. The impetuosity of the French, and an early sacrifice of cavalry, lost them the battle. The steadiness of the allies, and particularly the admirable resolution of the infantry, were their salvation.

The Earl of Stair was congratulated on the event of the day, upon that nobleman's coming into the royal presence; for so may this be called, where royalty is;—what though

" _____ the presence strewed,"

be a battle-field, the flowers withered and trampled, the bodies of his faithful dead!

A halt had been called. The Earl received the Sovereign's congratulations with but a bad grace, since his proposal to pursue the enemy had been unlistened to. The last order, conveyed by Stolzenaw, as we have seen, had never reached the Marshal's ears, and he was therefore ignorant of its proposed unpleasing accompaniment, which, as he mentioned not, and the luckless Baron failed to make his appearance, the Monarch not unwillingly allowed to rest in peace. Lord Stair was, however, sufficiently wounded in his feelings,—whether justified or not we will not forbear now to question,—and made a cold reply to the King.

"Your Majesty conceived the plan," said he;

"it was for me to aid in its execution. Whatever may be the honour of the achievement, I entreat your Majesty to look upon as your own."

"Very well, my lord," replied the King, somewhat haughtily; "and you would have me infer that I also am to keep the blame, should there be any?"

"I trust the country will think with more generosity of our endeavours, than to impute the blame your Majesty surmises a possibility of," replied Stair, with some reservation; for he remembered that an altercation with royalty was a delicate matter: albeit, he was not always thus guarded. He therefore essayed, not by the most happy means, as it proved, to turn the conversation rather aslant in observing that he had feared the worst consequences to the army from the defile being forced, but that the Life Guards having left their post without his orders,—a circumstance he should strictly inquire into,—the pass was immediately lost.

"And when you institute your inquiry, my

lord," said the King, "I beg I may be informed; as these same Life Guards shall not want an advocate for their defence. It was by my orders that they left that post—"

The Earl made a low inclination.

"By my orders that they charged," continued the King, "and by that charge saved the rest of the army,—they, and the other regiment that so nobly followed."

Lord Stair raised his head with an involuntary impulse, as if the throat swelled to chokingfrom the intensity of feelings he was obliged to restrain.

"Where is Captain Villiers?" demanded George, in a loud voice. "I wish some more of my regiments were commanded by such captains!" And he looked sternly round at the commanding officers of one or two cavalry corps which had been less forward, or less fortunate, with a glance that seemed to wither them on the spot.

" Dismount, Captain Villiers ; you may no

longer hold that rank. You quitted your post, it appears."

The King was already on foot: he drew his sword.

"Kneel, sir. Your name?"

Villiers knelt on the blood-stained earth.

"Rise up, Sir Charles Villiers, Lieutenant-Colonel of the First Troop of Horse Guards," said the Monarch, giving him the accolade, and thus conferring the proudest of all military distinctions, knighthood on the field of battle.

"And," continued George, looking fiercely round, though fixing his eye nowhere, "when you again quit your post, let it be to render your Sovereign as good service. Retire, Sir Charles Villiers."

Many years had passed since Stair knew that name; but the recollection of his secretary's fate flashed upon his memory; and as he gazed on the glowing countenance of the young Knight Banneret, he became struck with the strong resemblance between them: but there were objects

of higher importance to distract the attention of the Earl, and not then did he make inquiry if a relationship existed.

The King ordered dinner to be served on the spot; and we are informed, with great gravity, by an historian of the day, that it consisted of "a cold shoulder of mutton." Whether Lord Stair was bidden, or came a very willing guest, we are left to make our own surmises. The repast was short, for the position of the army was such as to render delays even then dangerous; and on its conclusion the King determined upon sending a flag of truce, commending the wounded to the care of the enemy, while the rest of the army proceeded with all expedition towards Hanau, the way being now open before them.

Amongst those who rode up to congratulate their new Colonel, was none more sincere than Bohun, whose blue eyes sparkled with pleasure as he clasped the hand of his friend. He had highly distinguished himself for gallantry throughout the day. Villiers being ordered to select an officer for the flag of truce, assigned this duty to the young Lieutenant, who took a trumpeter with him and proceeded to the enemy's position, while the victors made the best of their way out of reach of the vanquished.

He crossed the river; and after his request had been made known, he was led up to the Duc de Noailles. The message was once more delivered, and replied to with the grace and politeness peculiar to our honourable foes upon such occasions. The desired aid was promised for the wounded, and parties immediately despatched to their succour, while an officer was directed to see Bohun safe to the river. The English officer courteously dismounted, and gave his horse to the trumpeter.

"Ah! my dear sir," said the little old Major of infantry (for such he was) as with infinite grimace and gesture he walked by Bohun's side,
—"Ah! my dear sir, what a pity,—what a great pity it is, is it not? that two such nations should

be at war! Ah, ah,—yes, I know ver well,—c'est pour la gloire,—c'est pour la gloire!—c'est vrai,—I know ver well," continued he, not allowing his companion the chance of a reply,—"you take snuff? On that field lies my ver good friend, mon intime amis—he was more better than my brother—he fell into my arms—he was not dead—I could not stop to save him—eh?—you see?—the mitraille,—what you call,—he was ver much spoiled,—what you call blessé—"

"Wounded."

"Ah: and now you see, sir, we can return to our blesses; and I shall have my friend with me again; and we shall take care of your respectables amis. Ah, sir, that two such great nations should be at war!" And having reached the bridge, he suddenly embraced Bohun and kissed him, leaving on his cheek part of the snuff he had declined, and hoping that if he should, by the chance of war, be taken prisoner, he might be so lucky as to fall into his (the Major's) hands.

"He's a queer chap that, sir!" was the only remark of the trumpeter, as Bohun took his horse.

The young officer thought so himself, but laughed while he blushed at the ridiculous figure he must have made in the eyes of his attendant.

They had now to pick their way through heaps of killed and wounded. It was an appalling scene,—a dread initiation for Bohun; but a day's experience, such as that field from early dawn had lent, was worth more to him than many years passed in the dull round of common life; and the hitherto effeminate boy might date himself man from that time.

They had come to a part of the ground where the last fierce conflict had taken place between the British cavalry and the household troops of France. An exclamation from the trumpeter electrified Bohun, who in an instant was off his horse and kneeling by the dead body of Colonel Thornhill;—the glazed eye, the dropped jaw, the cold rigidity of frame, and now dried stream of blood that had welled from an almost imperceptible wound, where sank the ball deep in his temple, telling too plainly the sad truth. The trumpeter, in rude but honest strain, expressed his grief. We need not say what additional cause for sorrow there existed in Bohun's breast. What would be the wretched Caroline's feelings when the tale was told? Who should tell it her? But there was little time for delay. He took Thornhill's watch from his pocket, as a relic of one he loved, and to be given to his daughter, and the purse, which had been her work. He emptied its contents into the trumpeter's hand, and kept the silken treasure; then mounted, and rode forward in silence.

The army was some way in advance, and the evening closing in wet and stormy, when Bohun came up with his comrades. The King ordered a second halt; and with the sky for a covering, instead of the hospitable roofs of Hanau, the allied forces bivouaced before that town, which

they entered the next morning in guise of a conquering army—proud in the clangour of trumpets and military music, the pomp of flowing banners, and the triumph of many prisoners.

The King's reception was enthusiastic; and for the band of heroes who accompanied him, no efforts of the citizens seemed sufficient in their own minds to show their zeal.

We do not purpose going into detail upon the further operations of the allied army. The campaign indeed may be said to have ended with Dettingen. The King was on many hands blamed for not listening to the advice of Lord Stair; and chances were, as the letters of Maréchal Noailles to Louis XV. afterwards showed, thrown away, that might have been turned greatly to advantage, had active measures been decided on. George was, however, too glad to have saved his army from destruction, to seek further glory, and the combined forces remained for some time quietly in garrison at Hanau. The Maréchal, unknowing of

the delicate position of Lord Stair, and ignorant of his sterling abilities, with sufficient modesty told his Sovereign that "it was fortunate for him he had not to deal with a Marlborough, a Staremberg, or an Eugene, otherwise the issue of the campaign must have been very different*.

"I thought," said Bohun, on the second day of their rest, "that you returned Colonel Gayton's bow very coldly, Villiers."

"He will, perchance, feel something colder, when this wound is well," returned the Knight. "It is a hard thing to accuse a man of assassination, or the attempt, without good proof.—Would to heavens I could tell who else was near me at the time, to bear witness!"

^{*} Historical.—Complimentary letters between Stair and De Noailles, nevertheless, passed on the occasion of the wounded being left to the enemy's care, expressing the highest esteem for each other. Some badly wounded officers, taken, as Lord Carteret observed, "in their fine clothes,"—an odd remark for a sensible man, in an official despatch,—were sent in Lord Stair's state-coach to the Duke, with a flag of truce, the day after the battle.

"What can you mean!" exclaimed Bohun, in astonishment.

Villiers made no answer, but sullenly looked over some official returns.

"If you mean," pursued his friend, "who was near you when you were wounded, I can give you the information, having seen the whole affair."

Villiers raised his eyes for a moment, as waiting Bohun's further communication.

"Yes, I was near you; and you can scarcely have forgotten," continued the Lieutenant, "that there was a certain French officer of cuirassiers, who robbed you of your prey, and almost of your life,—he was near you."

"Most wonderful! You indeed give me credit for a short memory."

"And Colonel Gayton, of whom more anon, seized the said officer manfully by the collar, after he had fired the contents of his pistol into your worship's shoulder."

"You confirm my suspicions: it was for the old grudge of his arm."

"Was ever any body so perverse! I tell you," insisted Bohun, "that Gayton seized the man who fired his pistol at you:—there, will that satisfy you?—'fore gad, 'tis well I found you in this humour, or we should have had a second Park affair."

* Dolt!—idiot!" exclaimed Villiers, leaping up, ashamed of the obtuseness and inveteracy he had displayed.

"Mais j'en conviens?" cried Bohun. "But I beg your pardon; yet it is the most approved thing to bow to the rising sun; and how can one do so more decidedly than by agreeing to all you say?"

"Come, enough, master Lieutenant. I hope this affair will give you your troop, at last; —but touching the Colonel, of whom you said 'more anon'?"

"This—that we are the greatest of possible friends, and he is an excellent fellow."

" Aye? You seem to have mightily changed your opinion of him. But be as short as you con-

veniently can, for, without wishing to seem rude, I must tell you that I should infinitely prefer your room to your company for the next two hours."

"Oh, I cry your pardon! I am off like a shot," cried Bohun, snatching up his hat good humouredly, and about to leave the room.

"A most warlike simile!" said Villiers, seizing him by the arm, and pushing him again into his chair. "Confound that Frenchman's ball," he exclaimed, gnashing his teeth at the anguish of a violent twinge, "I thought I felt all the fighting Colonel's cayenne along with it; but see how a man may be mistaken! Well, we will shake hands to-day, at all events. But how became you such friends with him?"

"Thus," replied Bohun:—"You know that circumstances prevented our ever meeting in England; for the Colonel, or the Major that was, had a wholesome fear of four stone walls before his eyes, and it was inconvenient for him to appear in London or its vicinity, where we always were. Last year the King's, to his great joy, were

ordered abroad; and old Fitzmorris, not liking the idea of a Dutch or a Flemish winter, went out and gave Gayton the step. I cannot deny that I always felt as if something was hanging on my mind whenever his threat came to my recollection; and, on the evening we joined the army, I sent my compliments to him."

"The deuce you did! You were a fortunate fellow to escape an arrest. But you had the honour of an interview, doubtless?"

"Certainly."

"And a prick of his sword; and so the affair ended."

"By no means. He received me in the presence of several officers of his regiment, confessed himself to have been in the wrong, and made me a handsome apology."

" For what ?"

"Aye, there's the rub! He had forgotten the whole thing," concluded Bohun.

Villiers continued to command the Life Guards with great credit, and manifested infinite zeal and activity in rendering them efficient after the late terrible conflict; but his wound, which for some weeks he considered as too trifling to claim particular notice, at length assumed so dangerous an appearance that he was obliged to resign his duty into the hands of another. Several of the less badly wounded officers and men had contrived to escape from the field of battle, and found their way into Hanau, where they received from the inhabitants of the town the most soothing and careful attention.

The women, with that tenderness for which they are ever so distinguished on these occasions, were assiduous and prompt in their endeavours to alleviate the sufferings of the brave men who had bled so near their walls; but most conspicuous of all were a society of Sæurs de la Charité, who, by twos and threes, went about doing good. Villiers felt an untold pleasure from the attention of these sisters, who visited him in their daily round of benevolent duty.

Amongst them was an Englishwoman, the sweetness of whose voice, he thought, spoke more peace to his mind, and thus contributedin imagination at least-more to the cure of his bodily anguish than the attendance of any others, either leech or sister. She had been veiled during her first two or three visits; but the heat of the room, where the wounded man was lying on his sofa, upon a sultry day of August, induced her to put this aside, when a countenance, which but a few years since must have been one of resplendent loveliness, unconsciously gave itself to his view. There was a mild expression of dignified beauty about her, that, carrying his fancy back for twenty years, when she would have been in the bloom of girlhood, suggested to his mind the most perfect face and figure in the world.

The Nun who accompanied her spoke only German; but, although Villiers understood not that language, he sprang from his couch with a suddenness that alarmed his nurses, when, upon her name being called, he decided that she was the lost love of his friend Ludlow.

"I have heard you called Ida," said he, with wild impatience: "it must be so,—it is,—your other name is—Clifford?"

She confessed it, much surprised.

"Alas!" said Villiers, "that I should have met you thus in a foreign land, at a moment when I have but to communicate the saddest news"—he stopped—"you whom he had long believed not of this world!"

"Whom—whom do you mean?" said she, in great agitation; but quickly exerting her self-command, she turned away her head, and motioned with her hand as if to deprecate for awhile all further speech. She first broke silence.

"Is it possible that you can have known him?"

" Ludlow !"

"The same. This is wonderful!" She raised her clasped hands, then crossed herself, and with a vast effort, stood calm, rigid, and unmoved as a statue, with her arms dropped by her sides. The silence was unbroken for a minute.

Villiers was lost in amazement; nor was the other sister, less astonished at the scene, unable to comprehend a word that was uttered.

"You have not come hither of your own accord; you are an instrument in other hands," said Ida, "and sent to tell me of some strange thing. You said your news was of the saddest; what? Believe me I can bear to hear it."

"Not now, sister; not now," said Villiers, as he once more reclined upon the couch. "Tomorrow."

"To-day," demanded Ida, firmly. "You would tell me of—you would say he is taken from a world where he has been unhappy. May he find peace!" She crossed herself again; but the agitation that at first beset her was no more, and Villiers felt astonished, perhaps hurt, that she could, with such a calm deportment, hear what she believed to be the fact. But he knew not that the tongue of malice had been busy

with the name of Ludlow; or, if he had heard this from himself, it was long forgotten. He knew not that her heart had been warped from him; and he felt that he had to communicate the death of one who loved to madness, to her by whom he imagined that passion was returned.

But no more was the soul of Ida wrapped in the wish for earthly affection: her thoughts, her hopes, were centred higher, though it is possible that strong had been the chains she had to break, and great the struggle; but the mastery was gained.

"She is hardened!" thought Villiers, unjustly and illiberally. "She was unworthy such a heart as Ludlow's!"

But presently his better feeling predominated, and he gave her full credit for the fortitude she displayed.

"He is dead," said Sir Charles.

"May he rest in peace!" exclaimed the Nun, raising her eyes, and clasping her hands firmly.
"No more—no more to-day," she continued:

-" To-morrow I will ask for all you have to tell."

"It shall be yours," said Villiers; "and, in return, dare I beg for some word from you, which may elucidate this mystery? for, believe me, sister, to meet you here passes all strange things that ever happened to me, and they are not few."

She waved her hand, and, accompanied by the other Nun, departed.

It is now necessary to mention that Ludlow's death had been communicated to Villiers by the executor of the former. The unhappy man was drowned, falling a victim to his eccentricity. It will be recollected that he had a practice of locking up his servants every night, and releasing them in the morning. On repairing to their dormitory for this purpose, he was suddenly fawned upon by a large Newfoundland dog, and pushed into the water. The pond was muddy, and full of weeds, which prevented the faithful animal from extricating his master; and

although the servants saw the accident from their window, they could render no assistance. His will, as appeared from the date, had been made immediately after his departure from London. Most truly did his prophetic words turn out, that he should never again behold his friend: but, short-sighted as he was, himself leading a peaceful life, had been the first to quit the world; while the soldier, escaping through the number-less perils of a battle-field, still lived to hear his fate.

All his property, with the exception of a few inconsiderable legacies, was bequeathed to Ida Clifford, should she be yet alive; and failing this, or hearing of her for the space of a year, to Villiers. It must be imagined that the discovery of one for whom Ludlow had already made such unavailing search, and felt so fiercely the gnawing pangs of regret and inextinguishable attachment,—one whom he had considered, and could once scarcely avoid hoping dead, yet

uncertain of her fate,—it must, indeed, be thought that so unlooked-for a meeting was calculated to interest and astonish Villiers in a very high degree.

On the next visit of the sisters, which was not for a few days, Ida appeared calm and unmoved as usual. She had, perhaps, explained to the other Nun the nature of her inter-communication with Sir Charles, as that good sister manifested no surprise on the renewed excitement with which he received his countrywoman.

In as concise and gentle a manner as he could effect it, Villiers related all that he knew relative to Ludlow, keeping back, as yet, only the circumstance of his will being made in her favour, which required great delicacy of touch.

Having concluded all other matter that he thought could interest Ida, a silence succeeded which was for some moments unbroken. At length Villiers gently demanded a performance of the promise that she had tacitly made on her last visit.

She complied with his request in the following words.

CHAPTER V.

"I'll read you matter deep and dangerous,
As fall of peni and advent rows spirit,
As to o'erwalk a current, maring load,
Upon the unsteadlisst forting of a spear."
Shausplane.

"At this distance of time I scarcely know how to relate the few circumstances of my life, as connected with the history of those you are already aware of, in such order that they shall interest without tiring you; or where to dwell, or where to pass lightly over,—where to commence, or where to stop.

"Here I have been many years. It is a fearful reflection for a woman, Sir Charles; at least it would be so for one who had not, like myself, long since renounced the freer world, and ceased to draw from recollection of its pleasures any source of enjoyment, or of regret. Here I have remained a cloistered maiden, yet one who has not entirely been lost to society, for I have tried, humbly tried, to do good to my fellow-creatures, and hope that my exertions will not be found in vain. But it becomes not the profession of humility so to speak.

"Mine is a plain tale, and soon told: indeed. but that I know you affectionate and true to the memory of one whom I can speak of as calmly as if he had been my brother, I should not now risk the chance of wearying you, or falling myself into an excited state of error which it is not good for a daughter of the church to yield to."

"Fear not to tire me," said Villiers; "your words, your voice,—its very tones soothe and charm me; they fall upon my ear like those of one as dear to me as you once were to him who has left us; they are like murmuring summer brooks, melancholy, sister, I admit, but fascinating. What must they formerly have been

to a heart whose every composing particle was deep passion!" thought Villiers.

"Hush, hush!" said sister Ida: "this is language too like—it is long since I have heard such,—words I must not hear again.

"You know of the plan formed in the heat of unreflection, by Mr. Ludlow, to snatch me from the hands of Father Michael, who was conducting me to a convent, as he (Ludlow) believed, in his heart, against my will, against my judgment. It was not so. You have told me much that tends to comfort; for I would fain not think too badly of those who have departed. I honour his memory for the love he bore me-I regret him; and yet I am soothed by the change that latterly came over his fierce spirit, which you tell me of: he was almost too energetic, too wild to love; and yet I bore him affection so strong that many years-alas! that I should have to confess it-were necessary to turn the current of my thoughts entirely away from his remembered form and high bearing.

But I have succeeded, although it cost me much. You are the first—the only person, since I left England, to whom I have confided any portion of my grief-grief no more. Strange that to a man it should be! Yet I esteem myself proof, now, to all hurtful recollections. Whither do I wander! I loved him, Colonel Villiers, for his manliness,-his mind, which was great; perhaps I loved him in gratitude for that which he bore me: in short, for any thing rather than beauty or grace of person, for he had neither of these. His powers of thought, his language, were, to my young apprehension, as gigantic as his strength, while I was a fragile weak girl. What could he see in me, I thought, to cause such?

"You have heard my little history as far as that dreadful morning when my father intrusted me to the good priest, and to the unfaithful servant who deserted me. You have told me of Mr. Ludlow's intentions to take me from these. I could have forgiven him this, had he not,—

what do I say,—I have long, long forgiven all—had he not used such means to prevent his schemes from failure; but, short-sighted as he was, he took such precautions as returned with bitterness in their effects upon his own heart, and exposed me to infinite fear and trouble.

"The wicked man, the gipsy, whom he had made his partner in the transaction, had, unknown I believe to Mr. Ludlow, often persecuted my sisters and me, by watching, and crossing our path, or following us in our walks, if we were by ourselves. We feared this man; for my father had caused him to be brought before the magistrates of the county on suspicion of a robbery, and spoke much against his character. However, Mr. Ludlow at that time proved for him that he could not have been present; but he was a very bad man. Conceive my alarm, when on that morning I saw this person coming up to Father Michael, and motioning to us to stop. We did so, and he dismounted quietly. as if he had something to communicate; but

suddenly he caught the bridle of the Father's horse, which reared, threw him on the heath, and galloped off. I turned to look for the groom, but he had stopped, and seemed hesitating what he should do, when the gipsy fired a pistol, and he immediately fled, perhaps but too glad to find himself unhurt. This was all done in an instant. My horse started, and I believe I let him go where he would; but the dreadful gipsy was by my side immediately, on his tall horse; and seizing the bridle while he held me to the saddle, that I might not throw myself off, he went away I knew not whither. Yet, if I was alarmed at first, what was my agony of distress, when, at the distance of about a hundred yards, or but little more, appeared Mr. Ludlow! He could not save me. I implored him, by holding out my arms, but all in vain; his horse had taken fright, and was far on before us. We galloped past him at a fearful rate across the heath. Yet what did he there? I had no time for thought, and not till long after did I think that there was a combination between him and the dreadful Giles (for that was this gipsy's name)—a name I cannot now pronounce without a shudder.

"He took me away miles and miles. I was more dead than alive with fright and exhaustion when we stopped, and this was at the edge of a thick wood, into which he made me leap my horse, or try to do so; for the poor animal fell with me, and I lay, not senseless, but nearly without power, for a few minutes, amongst the long fern and grass, while he beat my favourite faithful creature till it rose again. Once more he threw me on my saddle, and urged the tired horse further into the depth of the wood. The very idea of this place terrified me, for it had an evil reputation; and the country-people feared to approach it, from the robbers and vagrants it was supposed to harbour. However this might be, I saw none. I would have given much to behold a human being; even the appearance of the greatest wretch I should have hailed with

pleasure; - any thing was better than being alone with this hateful man; but no one came to my assistance. I expected he would soon murder me, in revenge for my father's ill offices. All this time he had not spoken a word, but his looks were such as to strike me with terror. I was a weak girl, of eighteen, and could not, even should an opportunity offer, run far before he would overtake me; and if I attempted it, his vengeance would be sure to come upon me with the greater violence. Oh! the lost, the desolate feeling,-the dread I felt at that moment! Where would he lead me? Before us there was the wild, thick, almost impenetrable forest. At every step my horse stumbled. I feared I should faint, and almost hoped I might at once die; but even then I did not altogether despair. I had never injured a creature, that I knew of; and I trusted that there was a power which would still shield me from harm. After going on thus for nearly a mile, as well as I could judge, we came to

rather a more open space, beyond which lay what seemed a high barrier of rock; and turning this, the most majestic scene I ever beheld presented itself. Little did I think of its beauty at the time; but often since, the wildness of that scenery has come suddenly upon my recollection like a splendid picture. There was a vast fissure, or rather hole, in this massive pile. through which the light streamed from the open space beyond (for we were in comparative darkness), and disclosed an immense amphitheatre of wood and rock and falling water: and the day, which was in the early part damp, had now brightened up. There were craggy paths, which it seemed almost impossible for a human foot to ascend, and ledge above ledge, one overhanging the other,-it was a fearfully wild scene. We entered this dell. A little in advance to the left, the mouth of a dark cave showed itself. "Here, then," thought I, "I am to be taken, and in a few minutes I shall be murdered." I remembered my helplessness,

and then I despaired. A fallen tree lay across our path, and the man beat my horse, trying to urge him over it, but to no purpose;-he fell with me, and I was caught in the gipsy's arms. I shrieked with terror, but it was useless there. I tried to propitiate him by offering my purse, and promising every reward which my father could give, or I could think of, to abstain from hurting me; but he was only the more violent on hearing my father mentioned. He swore dreadfully; and having taken my purse, snatched at my watch and a picture, that hung together at my girdle and round my neck, by a strong hair chain. They would not give way. He took out a large clasp knife, and was, I thought, now about to kill me. I was on my knees; but he threw me across the tree, and raised his knife to my throat. It was only to cut the chain, however; yet with the desperate energy of terror I struggled to get free, and pushed him back while off his guard; -he fell, and the weapon closed upon his fingers. There was no time

for thought; there was no time even to scream: I fled with a swiftness that I can scarcely now account for my possessing. My habit had already been torn away by the bushes, and impeded me not. I fled-whither I knew not,fear lent me wings. I rushed along, and found myself at the foot of the rocks. There was a narrow cleft, and a natural path of stairs widening as they ascended, and up these I went. I could hear the gipsy close behind, swearing and running after me. I might expect no mercy now; but rather than surrender myself to him. I determined to leap from the precipice. It was a dreadful thought, a dreadful resolution; but in such a moment, what other could I resolve on? There was a turn in this narrow stair-like passage, with a large loose stone almost tottering on the brink of the ledge, which I had just reached, and with all my force I rolled this down behind me; -it gathered force as it went, and took others with it in its descent. They struck not the gipsy, but effectually blocked

up the passage, so that he could not follow. There was apparently no other path quite up to me; but he clambered on the outside of the rock, and I found I must ascend higher. I had nearly exhausted all my newly-acquired strength; but still I went on. The path was quickly losing itself, and the steps, becoming smoother and wider apart, were more dangerous; but I had no fear, except that of again being overtaken by Giles. I was careless about falling, and perhaps owed my safety to this. At length I reached a bare crag, beyond which there was no further progress. Here I must stop, or fall into an abyss which it overhung, and be dashed to pieces. I looked over, and beneath, on another ledge, was the dreadful gipsy. But he could not possibly approach me without endangering his own life. The face of the rock was as smooth as glass, without a shrub to hold by; but he was active, and tried it. He must go out even, and hang by his hands, to get where I was; besides, one of them

was much cut—I hoped it was impossible. He crept carefully along, and held by the jutting-stones above him;—his feet slipped, he swung out, and fell amongst the rocks below. I did not even hear his cries, if he uttered any. I had dropped nearly as dead myself, before I think almost he could have reached the ground. I sank on the stones where I stood, and lay, I could not tell how long. My senses returned not after that moment of deliverance, horrible as it was, for some hours. When they did come back, I thought I had dreamed all I have recounted; but presently the rush of memory told me it was true.

"I am not going to enlarge upon my feelings, Colonel Villiers;—you may suppose them to have been of no ordinary kind. I will merely continue the simple narrative.

"The place on which I had lain could not have been two yards square,—it was a smooth granite rock. Had I moved but a little in my deathlike sleep, or on returning animation, I

should have fallen, it may be two or three hundred feet. I looked down once; there was the body of the gipsy-at least I took an indistinct mass of something that seemed like a man, lying directly underneath, for him. I dared not look again. I arose weak and trembling. The weather was cold, and now dry. The sun was declining, but I hoped would not set before I could get out of the wood, if I should be fortunate enough to find my horse. I began the descent. I made, however, but a few steps before I paused,-the difficulty and danger were infinitely greater than in climbing up. I had also kept too much in, fearing the edge of the precipice. I had placed myself in a position from which I could now neither move one way or another-up or down. My situation was awful. Above me, for a hundred feet, rose the perpendicular cliff. I feared to look up, lest I should fall :-- beneath me it was twice as deep, and I dared not look down. There was just room to stand,-there was nothing to hold by. I might

have stood there for years, before any assistance could be rendered. My position, in short, was such, that it seemed as if no possible exertion of any other person could extricate me; -in a little time I must fall from weakness or giddiness. I had often felt placed in such situations in a dream of horror, but never thought that reality would lead me there. The natural path or ledge of rock by which I had ascended, was only five or six feet beneath me; but it was scarcely broader than afforded room for a person to place one foot and bring the other forward ;-it was very sudden, and there was not the slightest parapet; on the contrary, it rather declined towards the edge, and this was all that lay between me and destruction. How I had gained the top so safely, I knew not. Could I leap down on this ledge, and go no further, I should be again in the track; but no human being could do so, unassisted. I must fall! The sun was going down, and I feared darkness would overtake me there.

In such a dreadful hour the brain is fertile in expedient. An old fisherman, who lived near my father's, had taught me to net and make knots, and I had practised the latter so well on whatever pieces of cord came in my way, that my smaller fingers would at length beat my preceptor's. I tore my scarf, and other parts of my dress, then into long strips, and twisted up a sort of rope. I strengthened this with the hair chain; and adding my pocket-handkerchief, I had sufficient length, I thought, to steady me as I let myself down to the track immediately beneath. I felt with my feet, for I had lost both shoes in ascending, for any projection round which I might make fast the middle of my rope. There was just the slightest one in the world, but it was close to the upright rock. I felt a notch or little channel at my feet; and to this, smooth as it was, I determined to trust for security; so putting the rope behind me in both hands, I let it fall gently down. The middle caught the notch,-I placed it with my feet; and then stooping very guardedly, grasped it again with both hands, tightened it gradually, and steadied rather than lowered myself down to the desired ledge.

"Here let me rest a minute, Sir Charles: the remembrance of the dreadful situation I then extricated myself from, even now almost takes away my breath."

Villiers spoke some words of encouragement, and after a few minutes she proceeded.

"It was a most perilous and difficult descent. Bleeding and cut as were my feet, I felt no pain from them;—the mental anxiety I endured deadened all sense of bodily suffering. I had got to the straitened narrow cleft, when a new obstacle presented itself, which had entirely escaped me. This was the mass of stones, that by rolling to the entrance had prevented the gipsy from following. But, although he could not with all his force move it, nor would ten men have been able to stir the rock from below, I, by loosening gradually, and with

infinite labour, the smaller stones which had served as wedges, at length succeeded in clearing the passage for the larger one, and to my joy it rolled, crashing into the dell beneath. It was dusk, as I once more emerged from what had seemed another world; but there was still twilight enough for me to distinguish a figure which I could not mistake amongst thousandsit was Ludlow. He had passed the cleft just before the stone rolled out; and possibly not knowing whence it had issued, or even what had caused the noise, followed the direction it took, and darting into the bushes towards the crashing sounds, left me for ever. I screamed faintly, but he heard me not, and I sank once more upon the cold earth. Happy was it for me that I did so; I should else have wandered about all that night, perhaps stumbling over the body of the dead man,-perhaps meeting some as bad as he had been. I knew of nothing more that passed, till I found myself, as the day broke, in the arms of my father and the good priest. They were placing me on a horse, after pouring some cordial down my throat, as I found by the choking sensation it caused. They had been searching all the day and night, and had at length discovered me as I lay. I would have explained all, but my tongue refused to utter; and indeed my father held his finger to his lips. Without molestation we passed out of the horrible wood, for such it was to me, however magnificent the scenery; and I was taken to a house far away from home, but where, for particular reasons as regarded Mr. Ludlow, it was designed to keep me a short time.

"Here, even my sisters heard not of my being. All they knew was confined to my safety, to the perils I had encountered, and to my father's intention of sending me out of England. My discovery alive was kept a profound secret from the world. I mentioned not the name of Ludlow as connected with the affair, and Father Michael had not met him. That he had any share in the transaction was therefore known or suspected

only by me, and I buried the thought in my own bosom. There would be, I imagined, little charity in disclosing it; for, however bad his conduct might seem, and was, I could not discard the recollection that it proceeded from love for me—and I had still a woman's heart. I was informed, however, of his distraction at my loss, and of his hovering for weeks about the neighbourhood. He had, as I afterwards learnt, become a terror even to the gipsies and people of the sort that haunted the country. I was told of many wild things, which induced me to believe that he was out of his mind; perhaps they were exaggerated,—I hope and trust they were.

"The body of the gipsy was never found. My father and the good priest secretly searched for it; but whether his own people had privately carried it away, or how it had been disposed of, they knew not. Could Ludlow, I often thought, have seen it in his wanderings?"

Villiers assured her that this had, he believed, not been the case. "However it might be, nothing could have sustained that fall, and lived. I had, as I mentioned, seen the body lying beneath me, before I descended; yet, when a day or two afterwards they sought about the spot, they found him not.

"Of course this prevented the necessity of publishing any details, which an inquest would have called for. Perhaps it would have been better for me, and for my family, that such had been done; as a thousand vague surmises, all wide of the truth, had got possession of the minds of those, particularly of the lower people, in our more immediate neighbourhood.

"After my recovery from a severe illuess, the effects of the sufferings of mind and body I had undergone, Father Michael was again intrusted with my conduct; and as all arrangements had in the meantime been made, I came over to Germany, and here I have ever since remained."

Villiers demanded if she had never seen more of her family, or heard of Ludlow. "Both," replied sister Ida: "my father has been here, bringing with him one of my sisters. They are all married now, and he is no more. For Mr. Ludlow, I did, I own, entertain once the highest esteem, admiration, affection: these were weakened by his own conduct to me, and the tales I was told; and though I had a hard task to discard him from my heart, it was at length done:—I mean as to passion; for I can still drop a tear to his worth, and to his memory."

"Believe not that he would have ever wronged you in word or deed," said Villiers, impatiently.
"He was great in principle as in mind. He loved you with a devotion I have never seen equalled.
He believed, he trusted you were in another world; he declared his most fervent prayer to be, that you might have met with a quick but easy death; for he could not hope that you would escape in the wonderful manner you have recounted, from the hands of that fearful man.

But, sister, this I have already endeavoured to show you."

Ida shook her head and wept.

"There still remains one communication for me to make," pursued Villiers, "which I scarcely yet know how to do, and I must revolve it on my pillow. From respect to his memory and your feelings, good sister, I must not too slightly mention; yet—" and he seemed speaking to himself—"I cannot too gently touch the chord."

He relapsed into silence, and for a few minutes there was no word spoken. Ida called to her companion, who was busily employed on some minute embroidery; and they soon after departed, to prosecute the work of charity.

We need not speculate upon the feelings of Villiers. They may be well imagined. The wild and wonderful escape of Ida, her ignorance of the true feelings of his friend, and lastly, the disappointment he in some measure experienced at the apparent coldness, the absence of a corresponding affection on her part, which, even after the years that had passed, he would rather have discovered.

But was this judging fairly,—was it not rather a sacrifice of the just tribute of praise, however silent, to a romantic desire for the exhibition of deep love and unalterable affection, in one who, when she vowed herself a bride of the church, whose usages, in her enthusiasm, she had the highest adoration for, was bound to mortify her worldly spirit, and cast away from her all recollections of temporal things, which might, by dwelling upon them, still bind her to the wish for a less holy way of life?

Who shall tell what sufferings were her's in the first gloom of that cloister? Why should he require the opening of those wounds her seared heart must have known, and in the closing of which there was undoubtedly a resolution involved, an agonizing fortitude, which must have been assumed rather than an instinct principle;

where determination had overcome the weaker spirit, and fruition of her endeavours to subdue had been the result only of years of wretchedness?

Was there, besides, no allowance to be made for idle tales tending to the disadvantage of Ludlow, raised by interested people, and exaggerated, highly exaggerated, by those more interested,—where priestly influence had been employed, and an encouragement of prejudice to warp the mind of one who had known too little of the world, or of mankind, to receive with caution all she heard?

In the course of next day, during which he was not visited by the sisters, Villiers despatched a letter to Ida, at her Convent, mentioning, in the most delicate manner possible, the wording of Ludlow's will, and desiring that he might be made the instrument of her wishes respecting the property which his solicitor at home would arrange to become hers immediately;

and he expressed a hope that, on his return to England, she would allow him to act for her in the same manner as if he were her brother.

Ida was sensibly touched at the generosity of Ludlow, and this proof of unfailing attachment. She wept bitterly at the remembrances all these things combined to call up. It would have been better for her that such had lain in the oblivion to which time and fortitude had consigned them; but her thoughts were not in her own power: not with herself rested the ability to resist the chastisement of these feelings, and she believed that it was decreed she must suffer for what, in the innocence of her heart, she now considered as former guilt.

Be it so: grievous as they were, how many thousands might not envy her the sorrow, yet purity, of those feelings!

But her principle was so high, her delicacy so extreme, that not for one instant did she entertain the idea of appropriating to herself the fortune left her. Even had she been in

want, she thought, the goods of one to whom he had refused for so many years to acknowledge that she existed, whom she now believed she had wronged in mind and deed, never, never would she have accepted! The very imagination that it was possible she could be so base. outraged her feelings, and made her lower than him whom she had, with whatever struggle, moulded her spirit to contemn, and regard as unworthy of her. Never, never would she listen to the proposal. Her own family wanted not riches, though they were by no means too well off; but had they been in the extremity of wretchedness, she had no right, in truth and equity, she thought, to derive a benefit from one who stood in the inexplicable relation to her of Ludlow. In this frame of mind she wrote to Villiers, thanking him sincerely for his kind manner of communicating the intelligence, and doing every justice to the munificence of her former friend, but desiring that, as he valued her peace, as he wished to see her again, by

every suggestion of delicacy and feminine propriety, and by what the feelings of his own heart might be in such a case, never more to renew the subject.

The lot of Ida had been a hard one; yet perhaps less so than if she had known or believed Ludlow fully and in truth worthy of her affection. Her mind had evidently been biassed against him; and thus they stood in a peculiar situation with regard to each other, till Death, on the one side, ended all wild and restless imaginings, all woes that only he could then remove, thick coming, regretful, but not to be spoken; and, on the other, a life of mortification, but piously resigned submission to a higher will, in some sort urged or supported by the consoling thought, that he whom she had cast her earthly regards on had shown himself other than she had, in her earlier years, been led to believe. Hence there was ever, during the continuance of both their lives, a doubt that verged to absolute ignorance of each other's fate or even existence, and indeed, if they lived, injurious surmises which could never, by any possibility, be cleared away.

But a more serious affair,-to the young Colonel at least,-shortly after occurred, calculated to blast his fame, and even place his life in jeopardy. So judged those who denied too ready credence to his self-attempted exculpation. This was the reported murder of Gibbons, which had created a vast sensation all over England, and was, from circumstances. now clearly traced up to the present Sir Charles Villiers, and his accomplice, Schmidt. The news flew like lightning, and not long was it before the Commander-in-Chief had advices that a murderer of rank served with his army, and the utmost consternation for the reputation of their corps was affected to be felt by most of the officers under the command of Villiers. Whichcote and Bohun, to whom he had, upon his most sacred honour, declared his innocence, were not amongst the number.

That an inquiry and most kind recognition of the son of his former friend had been made by Lord Stair, it is now idle to press upon the attention of the reader,—such was a thing of course; and much did the Earl regret that he so long trusted implicitly to the belief that Lord Beaulieu had amply provided for the young Villiers, and failed to ascertain what was, indeed, his fate. His sorrow at this accusation, then, was greatly enhanced.

Fortunate did Villiers esteem it that his wound had become perfectly healed before the mental and bodily excitement which his removal from the army would cause, had come thus upon him.

Lord Stair had a painful duty to execute. He had seen sufficient of Villiers during the short time that he was in command of the regiment, to discern his merit, and, independently of all private feeling, become attached to him. But we must defer their interview to another chapter, and rehearse, in few words,

ere we conclude this, the state of feeling between George II. and Stair.

While the allies, then, remained in this part of Germany, although perfectly upon terms where the movements of the army were not a subject of discussion, it was unavoidable that circumstances should often lead the King and his Lieutenant into warm arguments upon these; for a great difference of opinion subsisted between them on the above head, and Stair was usually prone to speak his mind. So frequent, indeed, had their disputes of late become, that, shortly after Villiers' arrest, the Field Marshal obtained leave to resign; while, the command of the army devolving upon another, the allied forces made no further hostile demonstrations, and the King also returned to England.

Note.—The ultimate cause of their rupture is said to have been as follows. Stair concerted a plan with the King for an attack upon the French lines near Landau, where they were fortifying themselves. It was to take place on a certain day.

George ordered the Earl to commence with the British, as they were the best troops for an attack; but Lord Stair hastily disapproved of this, and desired that His Majesty might begin with the Hanoverians, saying that he would support him with his countrymen. "This answer," says the account, "not pleasing the King, he discovered something of a dryness towards him, which the Earl observing, petitioned to be allowed to return to his plough, saying, 'it was natural that Princes should always retain in their service those who were most agreeable to them.'"

His resignation being accepted, he sold off all his equipage (a very splendid one), and repairing to the Hague to take leave of the States, he crossed the sea, and arrived in England, where, if he was before popular, he was now perfectly idolized.

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CHAPTER VI.

" Farewell the plumed troop, and the big wars, That make ambition virtue! O farewell! Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump, The royal banner; and all quality, Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war!" SHAKSPEARE

VILLIERS was soon summoned to the presence of the Field-Marshal.

"I regret, Sir Charles," said Lord Stair, on the entrance of the Knight,-" I regret that it should fall to my lot to acquaint so distinguished an officer that, in accordance with His Majesty's commands, I am to suspend you from the station which you now hold; and that, further, you are to be sent under an escort to stand your trial in England for a most heinous crime, of which I trust, for the sake of your own honour, the happiness of your family, and the reputation of the service you belong to, you will be able to prove your innocence."

"I have no fear for the results, my Lord," replied Villiers, with calm dignity; "and knowing, as I do, that from circumstances it is impossible my name should escape being coupled with so disgraceful a charge as the one to which you allude, I gladly deliver myself up to the laws of my country, and court the fullest investigation into the affair, certain that I shall come pure and unscorched from the ordeal."

"May it be so," said the Earl; "and, let me assure you, that there is no man in this army more ready to do justice to your merits; since I am positive that, did we remain together, you would every day exalt yourself more and more in the place which your conduct has already raised you to in my estimation."

Villiers could only bow his acknowledgments.

"May you soon be restored to the command

of your regiment," resumed Lord Stair, after a pause; "and rest assured that I shall be proud to number you amongst my friends whenever you shall have shaken off the attachment of this unfortunate accusation."

Immediately on returning to his quarters, an officer entered with the Provost-Marshal, and, showing him the order for his removal, told him that on the following morning he was to set out for Ostend and England.

Villiers was glad of even this little delay; as it afforded him an opportunity of seeing his friends, with whom, at his own quarters, he passed the evening, and of delivering up to the next officer in seniority the official papers relating to the affairs of the regiment, which had so short a time rested in his hands.

Bohun sighed, and wished he might accompany him; but Villiers said, lightly, his thoughts should now be turned towards glory, and telling him and Whichcote that he hoped before long to entertain them at a better house, and under more cheering circumstances, he dismissed them, and retired to rest.

The trumpets of the Life Guards for the last time sounded in his ears, as he was about to mount for his journey the next morning; and, with one foot in the stirrup, and his left hand in his horse's mane, he was just rising from the ground, when the leading files, followed by the whole regiment in watering order, passed before him.

This was too much to bear. He disengaged his foot, and, turning away, felt that swelling of the throat, such as they feel who part from friends with whom they have served and fought, and who have mutually appreciated them as they have been valued. But yesterday he had commanded that noble body of men, and now he was a powerless cipher; but even this would be tolerable, he thought, were it not for the bitterness of regret which told him that he left the regiment under such a heavy cloud, that, however he might ultimately clear himself, he

could not do away with the feeling of that moment, the bad impression which must rest on the men's minds, upon a subject which, when he *should* be pronounced innocent, would have ceased to interest them.

An officer in the rear rode up—it was Bohun; but he spoke not. The tear glistened in his eye as he pressed Villiers' hand, and, turning away, he put spurs to his horse, and in an instant was again with the regiment. Villiers cast one glance upon that moving sea of black horses, once more put his foot in the stirrup, and looking to the officer of the escort, mounted, and rode out of the town.

He could not but feel, from the manner in which Lord Stair made it apparent that the order for his arrest had originated with the King, that the sun of royalty had already ceased to shine on him; "or," thought he, "some message, some intimation, even a consolatory word from George, would have accompanied the mandate." But no: he was altogether de-

graded and disgraced; and he resolved that, immediately the trial was over, he would retire from public life, and, marrying Viola, shut himself up at Burnel Royal for the remainder of his days.

After a journey, the infallible wretchedness of which, in such a frame of mind, was only relieved by the knowledge that he was each hour getting nearer to the re-establishment of his innocence, and the rigid purification of his character, he arrived at the county town to which he was directed to be taken, and his person lodged in that security to which an accused felon must ever be doomed.

And now, after all these foreign events, which at the time caused no small sensation in the country, let us look nearer home, and inquire what took place in the vicinity of D—, immediately subsequent to the disappearance of Gibbons.

It is, then, necessary to return to the Rose and Crown, where it was known by his unfortu-

nate wife that he was in the habit of resorting on certain evenings, although he never staid over his accustomed time. As hour after hour slipped away, therefore, and no appearance of her husband, the wretched woman sent to the landlord for information, and his answers we may readily anticipate. The stable was broken into, for he had taken the key away with him, and his best horse missed; his pistols were not in the place where he usually kept them in the bed-room, so that he must have gone quietly up stairs and taken them out of their case; his shoes lay as they had been taken off when he equipped himself for riding; and his whip and spurs were not to be found. It was evident, therefore, he had ridden forth for some distance, The direction was the next discovery to be made. This was easily attained by inquiring at the turnpike-gates, and having learnt that he had followed the strangers in the gig, their wheels were next to be traced.

In a country town of the size of D-, such

an event as the missing of its principal attorney causes an immediate ferment. Robbery, murder, suicide, all present themselves to the fertile imaginations of the populace; and while his dead body is seen by the mind's eye of scores of people, in every fancied situation of horror—it may be that he has, on some secret mission, gone to draw up a will, as in the case of Lord Beaulieu, or a marriage settlement, as, we did hope at one time, in the case of Viola Myddleton.

The hue and cry was raised, the wood was searched, and from the track of blood to the spot where the body was dragged up and then thrown down into the den, the unfortunate man was soon discovered, lying on his face, covered with clotted gore, which had run from a deep cut in his head, and a punctured wound through his body. His whole person bore the marks of great violence; and the murder (for such they supposed it) was stated in the public prints to have been committed with the most frightful apparent barbarity.

Near the spot the ground appeared newly dug, supposed to have been intended as a grave for the victim, and the idea then abandoned for want of time. Here, also, was found a knife, with the initials C. V. engraved upon it. This evidence itself, of Villiers being concerned in the affair, from his having been at the inn in company with Gibbons the evening before, was further corroborated by his companion's being seen at the neighbouring town early in the morning, when he stopped to get his horse shod. Here both horse and man were recognized; but as there was yet no report abroad of the murder, Schmidt was not detained, nor had he since been apprehended.

When, after a time, the identity of Villiers with the officer of that name in the Life Guards became certain, we may well imagine the feelings of Viola. Of the overwhelming wretchedness and misery with which she heard the dreadful intelligence, we may not attempt even the slightest description. There is a woe keener

to a mind like hers than the death of those we love, and this is their dishonour.

If Mrs. Myddleton had been awed by the report of Gibbons's murder, can it be denied that she also felt the relief from a heavy weight upon her mind in the knowledge, as she believed, that he had been the sole depository of her secret?

A thousand times had she repented of the evil of which she was originally the instigation, and each day increased the penalty of possessing ill-gotten wealth. But the disgrace which attached to such an offence as hers, showed itself so visibly in perspective, that she was content to let Villiers remain in poverty, rather than, by any display of generous feeling, rouse suspicion of the truth.

But what was the whirlpool of her thoughts under the many conflicting sources of agitation which assailed them, when letters were received from Villiers, informing her of the late discovery of Lord Beaulieu's will? Now all must be known,—now her degradation was certain; and his triumph would be as great as her fall.

An account of the battle of Dettingen had, in due course, reached Burnel. With what different feelings was it not read by mother and daughter! Hope and fear strong in the breast of each, but in exactly opposite scales. The name of Villiers caught the eye of Mrs. Myddleton: she looked closer; but it was to see honour and distinction attached thereto. He was safe,—he was full of glory,—knighted on the field,—and promoted to the vacant command.

Viola burst into tears—tears of gratitude and joy; but alas! after some time, how was her delight changed into mourning when he was discovered to be the undoubted murderer of Gibbons! To what purpose all these honours, when at home the name of Villiers was pronounced with execration, and stood side by side with shame!

Could it be? Yet the proofs were so strongfor such startling evidence is proof to the unwary mind where but one side has been heard. Oh! she dreaded the event, yet partly trusted the charges might be false; and still it would not bear thought. She hid her face in her hands, as if striving to shut out from memory as from sight the dreadful accusation that had so lately blasted her view.

In the mean time the Myddletons had been written to by the solicitors empowered by Villiers, and the will was in course of being proved, which done, nothing remained for them but to give quietly up the possession of the property, and prepare to pay arrears due to the legal proprietor.

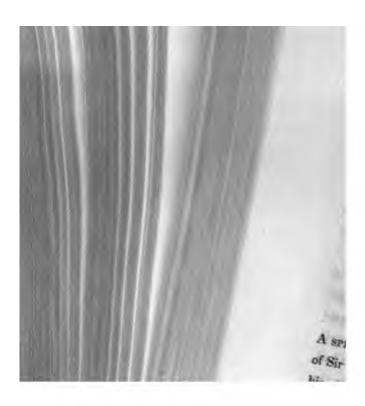
The property of Ludlow, too, had been taken possession of.

Villiers forbore to press too hard upon a fallen enemy, himself in no very agreeable situation; and he had, as we have seen before, left directions that as little publicity as possible should be given to the affair,—perhaps more for Viola's sake, and the recollection that his future wife should not, even to her parental connexion, suffer in name, than to any remorse he felt at the infliction of pain upon the author of his wrongs. But in England, events of such magnitude in society cannot elude the malicious eye of enry, the gaze of curiosity, or the merciless unmasking of the press;—and who can deny that this is as it should be?

Quickly did the whole business, at least as far as it could then possibly be known, find its way into the columns of various newspapers and little scandalous publications of the period, which daily or weekly were to be seen, with all their lies, and all their caustic truths, upon the breakfast-table of the beau, or the toilette of the lady.

But as no prosecutions at law were to be entered into, it was probable that it would, after furnishing its quota of food for the caterpillars who prey upon the faults of others, die a natural death, like every nine days' wonder that had preceded it. The confusion into which the Myddletons had been thrown, made it impossible to decide immediately upon what was to be done to save them from further shame. Stay in England they could not, but the winding up of their various affairs required much time; and although Burnel Royal was instantly quitted, a temporary sojourn in London could not be dispensed with.

And now a weighty undertaking claims our attention, namely, to clear, if possible, the character of the accused from those aspersions which rumour had so liberally showered upon it. A coroner's jury had returned a verdict of wilful murder against Charles Villiers and Hans Schmidt, whom the newspapers said had absconded, including, of course, both one and the other.



a week would elapse ere he was brought before a jury of his countrymen, upon whose unbiassed verdict he rested, in the security of anticipated freedom. His mind was nevertheless harassed, and his feelings, sensitive beyond those of most people in such circumstances, underwent severe suffering.

The day came,—a day that was to bring new life to his character and to his honour,—that was to place him where he had been before the unfortunate event for which he was now to undergo the most searching of all earthly scrutinies.

The court was crowded at an early hour, and the most intense interest manifested itself amongst the public. The gallery was occupied by numbers of the first people in the country, as well ladies as the rougher sex. The prisoner had much sympathy from the lower orders; for the first burst of clamour over, that succeeded the death of Gibbons, it was remembered that he was tyrannical in a petty sort, grasping, unjust,

and an exciter to litigation. All due credit was given him as an extremely clever lawyer; but in the abstract he had few friends. "I will try to be unprejudiced," says a departed poet*; "but ask me not to be impartial;—this is to have no feeling." Those, then, who had no reason to like nor dislike, made common cause with the majority; and a few days after his funeral, it was discovered that Gibbons was an exceedingly good riddance.

This reaction in the sentiments of the populace was to be expected. What is the inference?

—that in the proportion they were led to execrate his memory, they were influenced in their favourable disposition towards the prisoner.

Again, Villiers had not till now waited to protest his innocence. Human nature is prone to receive vivid impressions, and he was looked upon, at this crisis, as "a man more sinned against than sinning." Moreover, his manly appearance had its usual effect, improved as it was by the last few years, which had marked his countenance with decision, and given a certain curl to the lip, which he had unconsciously acquired in sneering at or hating those who were less gifted with talent, or more with the world's goods than himself. This indeed had produced a sternness of expression which suited with the solemnity of the occasion. Perhaps by the fairer part of the crowd,—and fortunate is man to gain such sympathy,—he was pronounced innocent before the trial began.

The judge addressed the jury, earnestly entreating them to put away from their minds any previous impressions that rumour might have possessed them with, whether for or against the prisoner. This was a case, he said, which would call on them for their most impartial consideration; but in their verdict, he had no doubt they would distinguish themselves for that strict sense of justice by which a British jury has ever been guided, weighing well one

circumstance with another, and inquiring in their separate minds as well as amongst the whole, the bearing of fact upon fact, the fitting of all the parts each with each, as they should come to their knowledge through the evidence which would be produced.

"Once more, gentlemen of the jury," he concluded,—"I implore you to dismiss from your secret minds all and every previous impression."

The various forms and circumstances of the trial we have no intention of entering into, and shall proceed as concisely as possible.

The groom was the first person examined, and the prisoner's identity proved. We can, however, anticipate the whole of his evidence.

The innkeeper of the Rose and Crown came next; we may also dispense with his, as we are already aware of what he would prove.

Next was the toll-taker, on the road leading to the wood. He corroborated the evidence of the groom as to the direction the gig had taken; with the addition, that the deceased passed through, about half an hour afterwards, or less. The selling of the spade to Schmidt, the finders of the body, of the pistol and knife, and the surgeon who deposed to the cause of deceased's death, followed.

The next person called was the blacksmith who had shod deceased's horse, ridden by Schmidt the morning following the murder; and after him, the landlord of the Lamb Inn, who, having lived as a servant with Gibbons, swore to the bad character of his clerk, as well as to certain words of bad import, as he contrived to term them, uttered by him on the evening the transaction took place, as well as on the occasion of his leaving Gibbons' employ years before.

The counsel for the defence submitted, that this was irrelevant to the cause before the jury; but he was overruled by the judge, who said it might tend rather to the advantage of the prisoner.

The precise words made use of on the former occasion the witness did not recollect; but they vol. III.

went to make out a threat of revenge upon the deceased, even should an opportunity not offer till Schmidt was grey-headed.

Again the learned counsel submitted that they were not trying the man Schmidt, and again he was overruled. There were not wanting, indeed, people to speak against the Prussian; for his character had come out in all its luxuriance during his sojourn at the attorney's.

The case closed for the prosecution, which we have thus summarily got rid of, as the reader is already in possession of the several facts; and these we must request he will study to remember, that we may take him along with us through the remainder of the trial.

There were no witnesses called for the defence, which we give in the prisoner's own words,

"My Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury,-I stand at the bar of a tribunal widely celebrated for the even-handed justice it distributes,-a

British court of law; yet, certain as I am that impartiality and wisdom will mark its decision, I feel an anxiety in addressing you that may possibly be attributed to a wrong cause.

enough to force its way to the conviction of the unbiassed, is often so apparently shaken in its essence by circumstantial evidence, that its clearness cannot readily be discerned; and, to aid this unhappy combination, circumstantial evidence often receives such corroboration from admitted facts and ocular demonstration, that if the highest in the land were to come forward and prove the alibi of the prisoner, although his acquittal may follow, the conviction of his guilt on the Judge's mind is so strong that the mere fact of acquittal does not carry with it that purification of character, which the very slightest whisper of suspicion must attach.

"It is this consciousness, my Lord, that makes me tremblingly alive to the hope that my innocence of the crime of which I am accused may have been so proved as not only to acquit in fact ostensible, but that it shall be set forth in so clear a light as to rush to your Lordship's mind, and the unhesitating assurance of my countrymen, with a force irresistible as a flood of electric fire.

"I seek to prove no alibi: on the contrary,
I freely acknowledge having been present at
the death of the deceased; but I not only deny
having aided in or abetted his death, but aver
my most solemn belief that it happened in the
self-defence of the person who is stated to be the
accomplice of my crime.

"It has been proved that this man, named Schmidt, and myself, were in company with the deceased at a tavern, on the evening in which the latter met with his death; it has been proved, also, that on the same evening Schmidt bought a spade, and that with a blow from some such implement on the skull, the death of the deceased was accelerated, such wound being in addition to a punctured one; and that the

ground was found to have been dug, as for a grave, about the spot where the transaction took place.

"It has also been proved that a horse and gig we hired, and my servant, were near that spot for some hours on the night of this transaction; that a knife, bearing my initials on the handle, was found; and that the man Schmidt was seen on the deceased's horse, at the town of ——, on the following morning, being then not many miles from the place where the body was found.

"All this, I admit, sounds very much against me, and would do infinitely more so were I to attempt a denial of my presence at the fatal encounter.

"It remains, then, for me to clear myself of the imputation of murder, by showing all I know of the affair in its true light, and thus placing it in such a position as shall take away from the various circumstances, those bearings which, without my full explanation and admission, they must inevitably be tainted with.

"The object of my coming to that particular part of the country was to obtain a certain document, the possession of which was of the last consequence to me. This document was concealed, and its hidden place known to the man Schmidt; by whom placed there, or for what purpose, it is now superfluous to say,—suffice it, that its nature was such that no person had a right to keep it from the eye of those who would, by the awards of my country, place me in possession of its contingent benefits. It was to obtain this document, by extracting it from the ground where it had long lain buried, that the spade was taken by us.

"I shall now beg to draw your attention to the fact, that the deceased left the inn after the man Schmidt and myself, and to infer from this that there could have been no previous intention on our part to put him to death,—more especially as, in his hearing at the inn, Warringham was said to be our destination, a place in the opposite direction from that which we took, purposely to deceive impertment curiosity.

"Had we then wished to entrap, should we have endeavoured to mislead him?"

A strong sensation was evident in the court at this part of the defence, and an earnest, though short, conversation amongst the counsel. The judge signified his displeasure at the interruption, and as the murmur subsided, the Prisoner resumed.

"It must also, as a very material circumstance in my favour, be borne in mind, that the evidence of the turnpike man on the Warringham road goes to prove that the deceased inquired for an equipage answering the description of ours, and that, finding none had passed, he put his horse's head the contrary way, and made similar inquiries at the opposite gate.

"It has also been proved that the deceased made a minute investigation of our proceedings, asking many questions of the groom, with whom he rode nearly to the place where we stopped, after which he suddenly disappeared.

"It is, then, positive that we sought not his company, but that, on the contrary, he sought ours.

"A pistol of the deceased's was found upon the grass, with the lock down, having flashed in the pan, for the barrel was still loaded.

"These, my Lord, are not proofs of my guilt, but go rather to establish the fact that he himself repaired to the spot, designing to watch our proceedings, and having discovered how we were occupied, to possess himself forcibly of a document, the publishing of which would not only blast his reputation for ever, but, it might be, affect his life.

"This document, my Lord, was the will of my late grandfather, Lord Beaulieu, by the fraudulent concealment of which, on the part of deceased, who drew it up, I have been deprived of the property for several years. "The deceased was in the act of taking this, it would appear, from the person of the man Schmidt, when he was knocked down, and subsequently run through the body, which unhappy circumstance, had I been near, I would have prevented; but the opportunity for the attack of Schmidt by the deceased was precisely taken when he and I were separated by the tangling underwood."

The prisoner then at some length detailed the events which occurred previously to this: the face seen between the rocks while Schmidt was in the act of digging; the furnishing from his own pocket a penknife to assist in opening the case; the struggle and fight between the deceased and Schmidt; and the assertion on the part of the latter that deceased had commenced the attack, and snapped a pistol at his head.

"With regard to the concealment of the body," proceeded the prisoner, "sorry indeed am I that I did not listen to the first suggesbear witness; but they are far hence,—far from their country: and for other friends, I have cultivated of late the regards of so few, that I think not of their support.

"I can now only return thanks for the patient hearing that has been accorded me, and conclude by declaring my innocence of the alleged crime, as I hope at a higher tribunal to obtain mercy for other offences."

Villiers intimated that he had nothing further to offer, and the judge proceeded to sum up the evidence.

Before he dismissed the jury to consider their verdict, he called their attention to the fact, upon the prisoner's own showing, of the existence of ground for malice prepense, in the deceased having, for a length of time, been instrumental to the keeping of prisoner out of his property.

"You will bear in mind, gentlemen of the jury," concluded the judge, "that the whole question rests upon circumstantial evidence: none saw the actual blow struck; neither can any, on

of being deceived is less, the actual instances of deception are fewer in the one case than the other. A single witness may be mistaken, or he may be perjured. Such mistakes,—such perjuries,—are not without frequent example; whereas, to impose upon a court of justice a chain of circumstantial evidence in support of a fabricated accusation,—I speak to a general view of such cases,—requires so numerous a body of false witnesses as seldom or never meet together.

"Certain degrees of credibility must be accepted in order to reach the crime of murder. The security of life is so essential to the value and enjoyment of every blessing it contains, and the interruption of this security is followed by such universal misery and confusion in a community, that although the condemnation of an innocent person should be by every means of undeniable reasoning cautiously guarded against, a jury is not to be deterred from the application of those rules which tend to the preservation of

human life, by the suspicion of danger to their own consciences, or the mere possibility of confounding the innocent with the guilty.

"You will, then, maturely and deliberately weigh and consider the force of circumstances; and while you permit, in its utmost bearing, all that is favourable to lend its advantage to the prisoner, you will remember that you have a duty to perform to your country which is paramount to all others: and let your unprejudiced decision produce your verdict."

It would be difficult to describe the speculations of the assembled multitude as to the guilt or innocence of the prisoner, during the hour that the jury were occupied in considering this. It would be idle to attempt inquiry into the thoughts of Villiers himself, or his feelings when they re-entered.

A solemn stillness pervaded the court, as the foreman announced the verdict; and the judge seemed lost in deep thought.

It was but momentary. He raised the fatal

cap to his brow, and proceeded to pass sentence of death upon the prisoner.

The silence had been awful,-the calm of the desert or of the grave. Suddenly it seemed as if an electric shock had passed through that assembly. Again all was hushed, as by some tremendous effort. But before the dreadful words could be all heard, a murmur of dismay ran round the court, -a whirlwind, as it were, had been loosened from the heavens,-the sobs, half smothered, were not all of woman; sterner hearts had been struck; but hysterical shricks were heard from different parts in female accents of woe, and, ere tranquillity could be restored, the judge, the prisoner, the whole pageant had passed away as a dream, leaving the heartwrung spectator to doubt if that dull void had so lately been the centre of such a thrilling A solenus stilleren pervaded the court, seese

Such was the effect of sympathy upon a highly-excited multitude. Predisposed in his favour, they saw the hoped, if not the fullyaccredited guiltless,—the young, the noble, the gallant Villiers, fresh from the field where he had fought his country's battle well, from which he had returned wounded and crowned with laurel,—they saw him but saved from this to be doomed to an ignominious death.

CHAPTER VIII.

Heaven from all creatures hides the book of Fate,
All but the page prescribed, their present state:
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know;
Or who could suffer being here below?
Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher, Death, and God adore.
What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,
But gives that Hope to be thy blessing now.

POPE.

And Villiers was alone,—a solitary man upon the earth. He had written to none: even from Viola he withheld all communication; for it might be that she had listened with too ready an ear to the unfavourable reports which were abroad, and till his country should pronounce him innocent he disdained privately to defend himself. What would he not now have given for one hour of Ludlow, with his strong mind, to advise and comfort, condemned as he was, and deserted—perhaps unthought of! But if this last apprehension found place in his mind, he did cruel injustice to one who in agony awaited the sentence which was to give new life by its favourable import, or, in its ulterior decision, doom her also to a moral death.

The prisoner was visited on the evening following the trial by the worthy chaplain, who endeavoured to pour the balm of spiritual consolation into his wounds. He believed not in his innocence, and exhorted him to prepare for that awful journey he was about to take by a full confession, and meriting forgiveness from above by his repentance.

Villiers was thankful for these good and pious intentions, but felt relieved when he departed. He abandoned himself to reflection, and thought of the young days when hope and ambition had robed his heart. Now it was indeed un-

veiled,—divested of all its flimsy covering, and in the possession of but one feeling, and that was despair.

And thus it is with but too many on the earth, whose youth has been flung away in idle watchings for the desired time of good. Yet true is it also if, in our riper years, we attain to what we have long so ardently wished for, we hail not the granted boons with that gratitude, that joy, uncreated, spontaneous, which lives and leaps in our young heart, ready to burst forth, and meet half-way the blessings we assure ourselves will duly come.

But, if they come not !—Alas! grievous is the disappointment,—one which so many know, but none may tell. Alas! that we should see our young hopes perish in the bud; that we should become wearied and disgusted with the world which God has made, and placed us in, as it were an Eden, to inhabit and enjoy!

"What is it," thought Villiers, "that not only now, but for months before, has so weighed down my heart? Can it be fear? Or is it that there does exist such a mystery as the forewarning of a doom?

" Is there not some secret link between futurity and the present which, when evil awaits us, drives its iron into the soul? And how shall man then avert his destiny, if it is written in the eternal book? Do we, in thinking thus, arrogate to ourselves, as man, that which belongs only to the Supreme Being, a fore-knowledge of events?-Nay, we but believe that man is sometimes vouchsafed an intimation-though for what wise purpose, let us not be bold to askthat sorrow is approaching. Time hurries him to the goal, not of his wishes, but his destiny; Fate flies before, and laughs to scorn his petty schemes of ambition. 'On such a day, or in such a year,' says he, ' such and such a thing shall have been achieved; I shall possess what I have long desired; my heart's wounds shall be healed, and sorrow known no more!' Vain mortal: the time comes; double it with years.

are you happy? Have you compassed your expectations? Has not, on the contrary, each day shown the futility of those hopes, the airiness of that fabric which you have built with materials thinner and more fleeting than gossamer?

"All the gladness you looked for is swallowed up in vain yet bitter regret; time has been lost, enjoyment sacrificed, and happiness you discover to be an unbased theory, non-existent, as the winds that have died far from us, and shall visit the spot that we inhabit never.

"Yet virtue—yet a foreknowledge of the evil—will it turn this aside?—My transgressions have already been written in the book before I was, the transgressions of omission and commission; I could not avert the punishment that was awarded me. Still might I not, by persevering in an altered way, prevent the accumulation of my pains?—Alas! all this reasoning comes too late!"

Is this superstition, to think that there is an

unpoured phial ready to burst upon the devoted head? Is this superstition—and if so, weakness? Many a great and wise man has then been weak; Hannibal possessed this intuition of impending evil: but superstition is the ruling scourge of a heathen's mind. Let us see how it affected him, however. Crossing from Italy, to his beloved Africa, he discovered that the ship was standing for a ruined sepulchre; and, struck with the omen, he desired the pilot to steer another course. His day had changed, his sun had become clouded, and the whole sky of his glory overcast; he sought to turn aside his fate.

The absurdity of this in a predestinarian will be acknowledged; but how does the Christian act who feels a dreary foreboding of the future? He seeks not to avert that which is set before him, but strives, by a steady perseverance, to avoid the depths of sin, and by so doing, escape an added wrath to that portion which has been previously awarded him.

And if this be the Christian predestinarian's

motive to action, we must not condemn Villiers when, abandoned to the gloomy horrors of his fate, he moralized as above.

Leave we him awhile, and let us seek other scenes.

Viola's grief, anxiety, and agitation, while the trial was pending, and the life and death of Villiers might be said to balance in the scales of justice, is far better understood than described. We have already stated that these were acute in the extreme; but when the intelligence of his condemnation rushed upon her, the woman took possession of her mind, as it had before been only in her breast, and nerving herself to action, as women can in times of great emergency, to the wonder of the rougher sex, and sometimes to their shame, she resolved to supplicate the King for her lover's pardon.

London, even the court, was not new to her, although a few years had elapsed since her last visit to either; but to procure an audience was

And if this be the Christian predestinarian s



to receive his last wishes, to weep with him in silence, or to treasure his last words in her bosom?

And he had doubted her, or—oh! it could not be—had he forgotten her? No, no! such a painful surmise was instantly discarded.

Caution was now to be observed. Her parents were, she knew, not likely to permit the plan to be put in execution; and only to one person did she entrust her secret. This was the old groom, Anthony.

The Myddletons, for the short time they were to remain in their own country, we have already said, had established themselves in London. But not to the court end of the town did they resort, where their late history was already well known, and where rumour, with her thousand tongues, had, as usual in such cases, been busy with their fame. Their fall had been great indeed, and while Mr. Myddleton's presence in the metropolis was absolutely necessary to the winding up his affairs, a horror of meeting

did Mrs. Myddleton pa less degree.

Instead, then, of goin would triumph over the lodgings at a silk-mero situation disadvants grows.

would triumph over to lodgings at a silk-mer situation disadvantageou proved to them comfo secluded, and therefore, quisites they desired.

Lord Wilmington was would Viola have prefer the Earl of Stair, she mig not indifferent to the salva concurred in ranking am tinguished of those under Had she been witness to battle-field between the K

perhaps less confidently relied upon his good offices; but happily ignorant of this, or of any misunderstanding, she decided upon applying to him for aid in her present difficulty, and having heard of his arrival in England, despatched her faithful Anthony with a letter which explained in concise terms the dreadful situation of Villiers; requesting permission to wait on him, that she might move his intercession with the King, or entreat him to procure her an audience in which she should be able to demand the royal elemency in person.

Anxiously did Viola wait for the Earl's reply. Hour after hour glided away: Anthony had left the application; but no answer came that evening. The next day also passed, and her wretchedness was increased by the observation of her parents, and the dread that their curiosity and suspicions might be raised by the sight of a letter, should they be present when it was delivered. If she was prevented from pursuing her intentions, all hope of Villier's life must be

death also. She was, keeping the project she secret from all; and and a prolonged sight that evening seize the e in the solitude of her on by the presence of the at the contents were mer eleven the next day, who at home to receive the late to be punctual.

Measures were now to secution of her enterprize clandestine, at least such parture from her parent's h could not, dared not, risk a them with her design; but by water to Whitehall, by which means they would escape the whole length of the Strand; and Lord Stair's mansion being near the site of old Richmond House, now no more, they could be landed within a few minutes' walk of their destination. A waterman, whom the servant had before engaged to take him on various errands to distant parts of the town, was now ordered to be in readiness at ten on the following morning, and to wait near the house to conduct them to his boat.

as home to receive the lady, whom he requested to be purpound.

Measures were more to be taken for the procounties of her enterprise. The visit was to be
conscious of her enterprise. The visit was to be
conscious of her enterprise. The visit was to be
parture from the parent's house assume—for she
could not dared not risk a failure by acquainting
them with her design; but here her conscience
acquired her of will. Anthony was to accome
pany her, and he proposed that they should go

eleven the next day, when Lord Stain round be

CHAPT

"Essay the power you have.

And make us lose the good

By dreading the attempt."

sale for home years not the

THE lapse of time!—it is a for him to whom it bring slight, the possibility, he saved, of the world to be a of consideration, hope, he minutes, how they speed! outstrip the messenger of g slowly while the excited me pitch of delirious expectation prolonged, would terminate

passed—was it the all-searching sun that cheered him with its morning beams, and spoke of hope?

The lapse of time!—How fearful for him in whom this principle is extinct! Still on and on —morning succeeds morning—the sun-beams shine, but not for the wretch to whom death would be a boon,—they bring no healing with them; there is no balm for his wounded soul,—a cursing blight clings around his doomed mind,—darkness,—an earthly hell,—he must not die, he would be called hence, but dares not go,—in him hope lives not, but he must still exist.

Is there not such a state as this?—There is!

—Woman has caused it—poverty has caused it

—the absence of all that can henceforward lend one charm to life—change, slight, inconstancy, blighted ambition—contemned, deceived, unrequited passion—the "death of friendship," or the death of all we loved.

But what has this to do with Viola?—Yet with her the hours passed heavily also till she should be engaged in the good work; yet too

with the dread convideath would overtake and appalling form. It was the custom from each other and fi morning immediately a discovery of Lord Beau silence, and abstraction. society, that, except when together, scarcely any co amongst the three, even for hours in the same a dleton was therefore glad excuse of business to be wife usually retired for th room, where Viola was s

Indeed the knowledge tha

opposite a feeling, caused mother and daughter to shun rather than seek their mutual companionship. No two beings of so near a kindred could in truth be more unlike: and thus deprived of her parent's confidence, care, and friendship, though she might be, there was sad consolation in the knowledge that she was by this means also free from the chance of her interruption. Dressing herself, then, not gaudily, but yet like a gentlewoman of condition, she departed on her purposed visit.

In the present state of London such an undertaking seems fraught with little of either difficulty or danger; but a century ago, no female of the better sort was secure from insult; nor was a gentleman less liable to robbery in the comparatively unfrequented streets and lanes that he might be incautious enough to thread alone.

Every ruffian wore a sword, and called himself by some quaint titulary designation, as one of the particular set to which he belonged. Street robberies were frequent; and so formidable the gangs into which these people embodied themselves, very many assuming, or attempting the style and dress of gentlemen, that the laws were boldly set at defiance. The police, indeed, must have been miserably inefficient—probably, in most cases, leagued with the peace-breakers; and the excuse for wearing weapons, that of self-defence, was wrested from its purpose, and turned to an opposite end.

At the time appointed, Viola left her father's lodgings, followed by Anthony. The waterman, attired in coat and badge, placed himself before, and led the way towards the Temple, where they were to embark.

The day was dark and murky, though the river, by the waterman's report, was clear of fog. The gloom thickened as they passed under the archway of the Temple gate, and Viola lifted her veil. At that instant a man of peculiar appearance crossed between the waterman and herself, and purposely stopping, gazed for an instant, with a rude stare, into her face. The

veil was quickly let down; but the man, as he proceeded, turned his head, to scrutinize with more exactness the lady and her attendants. The tawdriness of his apparel could not disguise its dirty appearance: there was an air of audacity and ruffianism about his person, which, joined to a haggard and worn countenance, caused an involuntary shudder in Viola, already nervous and excited by late events. His face, Anthony thought, was familiar to him. Suddenly he formed his conclusion, and was about to communicate the discovery to his mistress, when she quickened her pace, and walked down to the boat. As she waited till the little preparations were made for her reception, he stepped up, and demanded if she had remarked the man's appearance whom they met under the archway. She replied in the affirmative, adding, that she had felt a little alarmed.

"If you knew whom he was, madam," said the servant, "you would indeed have been frightened enough."



She gave a to lean for s crowd of wat gathered rous but most im Nor was the choco more rais discovered of a that even in Lo quality, un into the by-standers.

"Lean on me

down on this he of the lady's wai water," said a fin assist: till at let the affair a ludie

mark—and laugh, joke, nod, wink, and whisper, passed from one to the other. Viola found herself most unpleasantly situated; but though aware of what passed, she felt too faint to move, and continued to sit for a few minutes on the bench she had been led to.

At length she summoned strength to proceed, and consigned herself to the waterman's charge, the groom finding sufficient employment in steadying himself as he entered the boat. As he now sat penitent, and gazing at his mistress while they skimmed along, he could perceive the hand raised under her veil to dry up the silent tear. What a disquietude had not his incautious words excited in a mind already strained to a degree of over-tension. The name of Schmidt, associated as it was with all the horrible detail of the murder, brought again before her the localities dwelt on with such effect and embellishment by the papers of the day;—and it was the accused accomplice of



noble villiers guilty.

The abbey clock str eleven, as Viola reached Stair. A richly orname door, the footmen impa the porch, apparently no arrival of a fresh visito Terrified at her want of ing that the lost quarter ficed the chance of an in the first chair that presen but superbly furnished she was shown. The few she was kept waiting w suspense, occupied in fa haughty reserve as the this great captain's bear

mising any thing but austerity or anger. Stair, now somewhat stricken in years, had still the gallantry of the court and camp in his air; and whatever he might have been to other applicants that morning, certainly felt no disposition to quarrel with a lovely young woman, the nature of whose request involved so much delicacy and high feeling. Viola felt immediately relieved by the kindness with which he addressed her, playfully touching upon the fifteen minutes she had robbed him of.

"You were very near losing me," he said, with a smile; "and indeed it is only the merit of the fair lady who demands the boon, and I will add, the gravity of the occasion, that have induced me to wait, and accord her the honour of my august presence. But come, I have been playing the great man all this morning—now let me relax a little."

Viola would have opened her commission forthwith; but she was stopped by the Earl.

"Your letter explained every thing," he said,

" it was concise and ample,—would I had such an able secretary! she should negotiate for me entirely, for, I think, in five minutes, more would be ceded to her eloquence than I could achieve in as many hours.

His fair visitant blushed, and looked grave. Lord Stair took her hand, and changing his tone, said, "You are a noble creature; but dry these tears, and let us hope that we may obtain every thing we want. You apprehended that I had forgotten your application yesterday, perhaps; but I was not idle in your cause, as I trust you will find."

He then rang, and, the doors being thrown open, conducted Viola to the carriage.—"To St. James's," and they were soon crossing the park on their way thither.

"You have been presented?—Ah, I am glad of it,—To the Queen?—nay, though, that may hardly be." "The Princess Amelia assisted to do the honours," said Viola. "Then prepare to see her again, in five minutes."

There was something startling in this exhortation; but a little reflection made her grateful that the way had been thus paved, and she felt soothed, in the hope of protection and support from one of her own sex, in the formidable interview she had sought, and the harrowing supplication she wished, yet dreaded, to prefer. She was right in her surmises of Lord Stair's benevolence. "I have," said he, "begged Her Royal Highness to procure you an audience of the King, and have obtained a promise of her good offices, since I explained to her how you and my unfortunate friend stood affected towards each other, as well as the object of your design with His Majesty. You must forgive my having been so frank; it may be better for our suit."

Viola hid her face in her hands.

"But," said she, starting, as if a thought had suddenly struck her, "should his pardon be granted, will there be time"—she could not finish the sentence. "There are yet three days," said Stair, "and but dry your eyes, for we are at the palace."

As much to avoid the greetings of the people as to shorten the distance, the Earl had taken the park-road to St. James's, and he was now ushered privately into the apartments of the Princess, accompanied by his protegée. A lady in waiting appeared to conduct them to the presence of Her Royal Highness.

She was standing when they entered; and the graciousness and affability of her manner, with the benignity that beamed from her mild blue eyes re-assured Viola, and gave her courage to proceed. And now, for the first time, she may be said properly to have seen the Princess; for in the hurry of a drawing-room presentation, unless a royal personage pleases to stop the matron for a moment, with whom the young debutante is going round, she may well find it difficult to remember one feature of a face that has been before her during the moment of such anxious excitement.

And some will object, that they have never felt any sensation approaching to this.—Be it so! "An acquaintance of mine, I think?" said the Princess, after the first ceremonies of introduction; and making Viola sit down, she said civil things, mentioning one or two anecdotes of trifles which had occurred on the day of her presentation, that, while recurrence to them showed her kind disposition, displayed also that shrewd remembrance of facts and faces for which particular members of the royal family have ever been noted.

"My Lord," said the Princess, "His Majesty wishes to see you; I will send, therefore, to let him know that you are here, and you will perhaps then give your support to our young friend." She despatched a message to the King accordingly, to know when it would be his pleasure, to receive Lord Stair, and departed through a private door.

The lady in waiting, administered a little eau de luce and water to Viola, whose self-possession,

however, had all returned, upon the kind reception of the Princess.

Never was there perhaps a royal family upon more affectionate terms than, at one time, was that of George the Second. The loss of the Queen was severely felt, and the want of her governing hand, with the long foreign sojourns of the monarch, the marriage of some of the Princesses, and the agitation of politics, which soured the King's temper always hasty, somewhat unsettled their domestic comfort, and loosed the bands of their society; -still they were affectionate, one with another, and, by the household, very generally beloved. Never was there a man whose character has been more oppositely described than the Second George. Praise and blame, virtue and vice, have been equally given and attributed to him. A tender father and affectionate husband, he is yet pourtrayed as violently overbearing and unkind. "But close and repulsive as his enemies have accused him of being, he is yet known to have performed

many benevolent actions that would have done credit to the best of hearts.

"Come," said the Princess, re-entering by the same door at which she had disappeared, and beckoning to Lord Stair to bring forward their young charge. "His Majesty will receive you now," continued she.

"Have you any written paper, petition, or whatever it may be, to present?" asked Lord Stair.

"None whatever!" she replied, a little dismayed. "Is it necessary?"

"Perhaps not: it may be as well otherwise. Your interview will be short, therefore collect all you have to say into a small compass: be bold, and use but few words,—the King dislikes much speaking, and will not, from the pressure of affairs, give you many minutes."

"The shorter the interview the better," thought Viola: "so he but grants me my one wish, I will not trouble him further."

She clasped her hands, and looked up; but

more was no sign of tear visible,—scarcely any eminion shewed itself in her face; her native dignity of soul appeared suddenly to have come to her assistance, as, leaning on the arm of her protector, she crossed several apartments, and found herself in the royal presence.

Lord Stair drew back, and Viola knelt at the King's feet.

"Pardon, my gracious sovereign!" she said, in a low voice, and then raising it, repeated the words.

"Why, what have you done, my pretty mistress?" demanded George, forgetting in the hunry of business, for what the audience was solicited. "Who is this?" continued he hastily, and turning to the Princess. And he endea-voured to raise the petitioner from the floor; but Viola resolutely kept her position.

"Lady Villiers she would have been," said the kind Princess; "and if your Majesty will grant her prayer, she may be so yet."

"Oh, oh!" said George, bending his brow;

"this is the lady!—But she shall speak for herself.—Pardon for whom, madam?"

"Your Majesty's most loyal, most brave, but most unfortunate servant," replied Viola; and her firmness deserting her, she burst into tears as she pronounced the name of "Sir Charles Villiers."

"Rise, madam," said the Monarch, gravely;
"I can hear nothing from a lady in that posture."

Viola arose, and the King turning away, walked up and down the room for some moments; his cheek at one time flushing with incipient heat, and then, as if the consequence of great effort, his rigidity of countenance relaxing, and his eye losing its fierce expression. Suddenly he stopped.

"He is a gallant gentleman, my Lord; would to heaven we could save him!" exclaimed he, apparently forgetting the presence of Viola. "And we will,—that is, if there should be any home, at a later hour than she had anticipated, in the same carriage that had brought her to St. James's.

The silent coldness which she met on her return; the questions that she was, after a space, obliged to answer; and the upbraidings she had to sustain when the cause of her absence was made known, nearly overcame her once more; but she did not faint, for joy lived newly-created in her heart, and proved too powerful for other sensations. Pardon for Villiers—for him, in whose life her own was so closely woven, had been obtained through her means, and gladness and sanguine certainty buoyed up her before sinking spirits; for she would not admit the qualifying "if," which the King first pronounced, to weigh one hair against the fullness of decision that marked his after-speech.

The King bul left the room, taking with late Lord State and Viole, assisted by the Princess avendance, gradually recovered and remitted



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Under his eyebrows k
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"IT is the establishe Mrs. Myddleton, as a on the following mor blished rule of romanc interpose to save the gratitude gives him h "Perhaps it may not be offered, madam," returned Viola, with some asperity.

"I am only surmising that it will," said her mother.

"Then I shall certainly accept it."

" Never!—with my consent, at least; and, I may add, never with your father's."

"Were my father present," said Viola—for he had left the room upon the commencement of what he supposed would lead to a scene,—"I might appeal to him for his real sentiments; and till he is, I will hope that he may be more favourably disposed towards me. You once said, madam, that the poverty of Captain Villiers was the only bar to our marriage; he is now likely to possess abundance, and holds a much higher rank; and you will, I hope, therefore, not really seek to prevent it."

"I would rather follow you to your grave!" said Mrs. Myddleton, vehemently. "But," added she, with a forced laugh, "you are now

what is generally termed old enough to judge for yourself."

"I believe, madam," said Viola, rather angrily, "you were not eighteen when you considered your judgment sufficiently formed to make choice of my father?"

"It is scarcely fit to draw the comparison," said her mother, rising to leave the room; "for Mr. Myddleton was not a murderer."

Viola leaned back in her chair, and burst into tears. For some time she remained in that state of suspended energy which is often attendant upon suffering, when the mind seeks not even a relief from the load that oppresses it, and we are certain that nothing can occur for a given space to destroy the gnawing pain at the heart's core. Till the hour be ripe, till days, perhaps months, shall have revolved, we can hope for no solution of the mystery by which our fate is darkened, nor can the unquiet spirit expect repose.

Unemployed, irresolute, and alone, she passed that morning. About the middle of the day her meditations and her solitude were interrupted by the announcement of "a gentleman," whom, upon his entrance, she was much startled at discovering to be the detestable Schmidt. She was about to retire, and rebuke the incautious servant for admitting a stranger to her presence; but he so earnestly entreated a hearing, that Viola remained,—"but one minute," he said—"one half minute,—he had a communication to make about Sir Charles Villiers, which he was sure would give her joy—which would prove a balm of consolation;—it was a green spot—an oasis in the desert."

She sought, indeed, to stop his torrent of common-places, and to elicit plain sense; but the sound of one magic name had struck her ear, and she determined to hear any thing that might tend to clear his fame, although from a man whom she had, she believed, every reason to abhor.

[&]quot; Sweets to the sweet !" said Schmidt, as he

found her more disposed to listen, and offered a bouquet which he took from his button-hole, but which Viola, with a distant curtsey, declined. Indeed she was not without some alarm at being alone in the room with a reputed murderer; but whenever she attempted to move towards the door, Schmidt exhibited impatience, and at length skilfully edged her to the opposite side.

"Yet, it is fresh and curiously selected," said he, replacing the nosegay in his coat;—" curiously selected—but I will not be presumptuous."

"You had some particular communication to make, sir," said Viola: "pray let me hear it; for I cannot afford you much time."

"Right, madam, right; 'take time by the forelock,' so says the ancient proverb. You are inquisitive touching the motive of my visit. It is simply this, madam—simply to tell you that Sir Charles Villiers is as innocent of the crime for which he is to suffer as yourself can be. You have heard, doubtless, of a much injured, a calumniated being—a man doomed to be the spurned ball of Fortune. You have heard of

Mr. Smith? I, madam—I am that miserable, that unhappy man. I am the wretched gentleman to whose lot it fell to defend Sir Charles on that disastrous night, and this arm it is, which, in saving the life of my friend, dealt death where it was deserved. Aye, madam, in defence of my friend I slew him. I see, madam—I know your sympathy;—but weep not—forgive me, if I cause your gentle bosom pain. Surrender myself to justice!—What justice has the good Sir Charles experienced?—I should, if possible, meet with less mercy than he has done. We are both innocent. Would he were by my side: well, might I say,—

'Here stand a pair of honourable men!'

Patience, sweet lady:-you will say, perchance,

* Tis all men's office, to speak patience To those who wring under a load of sorrow.'

"But fly, madam, to the feet of royalty, and seek his pardon. Grow to the earth till you exact it. Such is but justice—'twill be less than mercy. Rest certain that it cannot be refused.'

Viola in vain sought a moment to inform him of the fact. Schmidt went on in his peculiar strain.

" Madam, if he is to suffer, trust me, I will, as sings our favourite bard,—

"Possess the people in the city here
How innocent he died; and if my love
Can labour ought in sad invention,
Hang him an epitaph upon his tomb!"

"You love the swan of Avon?—I knew it—I knew it,—I see it in your eye,— it speaks in your air. I pray you, patience,—I pray you, pardon me,—and, for Sir Charles, fly and demand the same for him."

"He is pardoned;" said Viola, firmly, "and, now that you have told me he is innocent, I have nothing more to wish for."

"Is there nothing more to wish?" said Schmidt, with one of his most widely extended smiles.

" Nothing," replied Viola, " except that you would declare this publicly."

"Nay, nay, ask me not," returned Schmidt.

"Already have the dogs of war been let slip,

and the huntsmen of the law cried 'havoc!' on my track. Madam, madam, there is a hair-suspended sword over my head, but not the sword of justice. I, an innocent man, have been condemned to fly the haunts of fellow-man. I fled to the moors, to the uninhabited wilds: I sought shelter from their wrath. 'Sharp misery had worn me to the bone;' yet wanted I not gold: it was my will, and not my poverty, that consented. Madam, it was a measure of expediency: my casements were all unglazed; I stopped them with my garments, madam; but they found me out through all my wretchedness, and—

'From my windows they have torn my household coat,'
and entered without crying 'hoa! who's within?'
But —

'Why should a man, whose flesh and blood is warm, Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?'

I started through the opposite, and fled.

'Were it my cue to fight,' thought I, 'I should not want A prompter.—I am not what I am.'

I knew their faces well, and said,-

'---If knaves be thus abroad,
'Tis time for honest men to hie.'

"But, madam, I much fear I weary you; yet let me speak one moment further. I have a piece of news, methinks, will not be heard without some interest. What did I not feel when I saw and knew my inability to act. Ah! here indeed my poverty, and not my will—well, it is this: in the days of distress, Sir Charles that is now, poor Mr. Villiers that was then, found himself forced to pawn a certain picture,—it was of a lady, and one he seemed to regret parting with so much that I am perhaps not wrong in thinking was your own?"

Viola shook her head. She had heard Charles speak of his mother's picture as being lost to him for ever, and she doubted not that it must be of this which Schmidt now told her.

"Well, madam, whos'ever it was," proceeded the man, "it seemed of great value, for the diamonds were large, and of a splendid water. The cover bore Lord Beaulieu's name: but the human frame must have support, man must have bread, and the pocket, money. By the merest accident, -one of those fortuitous circumstances-well, I see you are all impatience : -we then, two reduced gentlemen, met at this resort of the wretched,-this pawnbroker's shop, -and here he left the miniature. Now, madam, it struck me that in the days of his prosperity he would like to reclaim it; for, at the time, I never anticipated his being-you understand me-and on a certain evening I called at the shop to make inquiry, but alas! the precious thing was gone, gone, madam, beyond recovery, as I feared :not so, however. I traced it from place to place for my friend, who had, I heard, himself been looking for it. Now, madam,-now, Miss Myddleton, you will I am sure assist me in redeeming, or retrieving it rather; for it lies at a certain jeweller's of repute in Cockspur Street, by name."

Viola made a memorandum of the shop. "By what marks may it be known?" demanded she.

"Marks, quotha! — True, what marks? — These, madam: it bears an angel's face and form; but, trust me, without the wings. Bright hair dabbled with pearl, that is to say, dark, yet shining, and flows adown her neck of purest ivory. Credit me, madam, it is like yourself—your shape, your air, your age, about nineteen—pardon me,—her rosy fingers bear a rose, and 'neath her robe peeps forth a little fairy foot,—her waist, how dare I speak of,—

'Small by degrees, and beautifully less!""

Viola blushed, and exhibited various signs of impatience; and then was angry with herself, and blushed again.

"These may be in any picture," she said;
"are there none more decided?"

"Truly there is," returned Schmidt. "Instead of lutes, or other toys, a monkey, or a black boy, or a looking-glass in her vicinity, there may be seen upon a table that which tells us how we run towards the bourne from whence, and cetera, madam:—moreover, her eye is cast—by no obliquity of vision, mark me—upon that book which guides us thitherward in the

narrow path:" and, as he concluded with hypocritical solemnity, there was the alligator-leer upon his face, while Viola momentarily turned away.

He now demanded that she should furnish him with money to purchase the trinket. "In an hour from this time again will I be here," said he. "What! doubt you me, madam, the friend of good Sir Charles?-Nay, on the honour of a gentleman!" But Viola resolutely refused to supply one guinea; and Schmidt, finding he had so firm a disposition to deal with, repented having made the communication thus fully. Had he concealed the name of the jeweller, she must, he thought, have employed him as her agent in the business, when he would have duly reaped his advantage. Like an apt diplomatist, he forebore on the instant to press his point. But he had not yet done; for, as Viola was about to withdraw, he once more plied her with poetry.

[&]quot;'Grace and good disposition 'tend your ladyship: You'll nothing, madam, to my lord by me?'"

"How," said Viola, "you do not really mean to go to him?"

"I do, indeed, madam. I visit him, or in or out of prison.

> ' And thy commandment all alone shall live Within the book and volume of my brain, Unmixed with baser matter.'"

But Schmidt had little idea of trusting himself within the precincts of a jail; and the design of his visit to Miss Myddleton was, of course, merely to procure money, in whatever way; he cared not for the means, so he obtained the end. Her residence had been discovered through the waterman the day before, upon meeting and watching her down to the boat. As to her identity, he was a sufficient length of time at D—, after the new family settled at Burnel Royal, to have become acquainted with a face so remarkable for the originality of its beauty as that of Viola,—the heiress, moreover, of highest repute in the county.

She now hesitated whether she should write to Villiers by this man or not. But soon she decided on avoiding all intercourse through such doubtful means, and informed him that she had nothing whatever to trouble him with.

"Speak not of trouble, madam," exclaimed he:—"but you tell me Sir Charles is pardoned, —might I not know 'the manner of it,' as Will says?"

"The manner of it?"

"Yes, madam—the trick, the—ah, dullard that I am!—'Twas not in royalty to refuse the boon—any thing, every thing, to those brilliant eyes,—'two stars that from their spheres have shot,' or to those rosy monitors of lips!"

Viola knew not what to do or say. She was surprised, bewildered, frightened. "He must be a little mad!" thought she, and again moved towards the door; but each time she did this, Schmidt, seemingly without design, intercepted her passage, and besought another moment.

"Stay, madam-stay, Miss Middleton, I entreat you, by all you hold dear,-in the name

of my friend, of him you love, of the unfortumate but too happy Sir Charles, who-it irks me to be thus plain,-who, I would say, owes me various monies-a trifle to him, a mere trifle - a cool ten thousand or so; but 'tis nothing. Now, madam, as it is inconvenient for me to get this money from the bank, my name being Schmidt, or Smith, in the vulgate,purdon the license, for 'tis one, madam-' but I prattle something too wildly:'-in plain terms, then, can you assist Sir Charles's friend with a few pounds, say twenty, till the present storm shall have subsided. Oh, I will return it honestly, upon the honour of a gentleman,you cannot doubt me! I will give you my receipt and address, No. 3, Star Court, Little Compton Street, Soho. You see, madam, I patronize the west end. No reflections upon your place of residence, however, by any means -far be it from me!"

[&]quot;If you wait till my father comes in," said Viola, "he may perhaps assist you."

- " Nay, perhaps, he may not approve-"
- " Or my mother ?"
- " Nay, madam, she is not likely to stand my friend."
 - "Then, I have it not," said Viola.
 - " Can you not borrow it?"
 - "Indeed, can I not."
- "The servants, madam, may supply the mite," said Schmidt, insinuatingly.
- "Indeed, I cannot think of it. You must permit me to retire," said Viola, hastily.
- "Perhaps, then," observed the other, advancing, "you would not object to lend me some trinket on which I might raise the required sum for our purpose?"
 - " Our purpose !"
- "Yes, madam, my journey to Sir Charles. Your watch, or these bracelets;" and he laid his hand upon her arm, but Viola sprang to the bell-rope. Before she could grasp it, however, Schmidt pulled her back.
 - "At your peril!" said he, in a deep low voice,

his whole aspect changing suddenly to the infuriated look of a fiend;—"at your peril alarm. the house, or make me your enemy. Beware of what you do. You were better rouse the devil than Hans Schmidt!"

The faint scream of Viola now so disturbed him that he prepared to depart; but before he left the room he spoke in a hurried tone a few words of caution, still holding her by the wrist. "Betray me if you dare, Miss Myddleton. Remember that my destruction will be followed by your own; and not only yours, but that of him you most love in this world. I have friends you dream not of-ave, they are within call at this moment, who would not leave a limb of him or you jointed to its fellow. Breathe not one word of the nature of our communication to him even; and remember," concluded he, "you have been speaking with Mr. Stanhope Montrose. Utter the name of Schmidt if you dare!" He threw one menacing glance at her, and departed.

Mr. Myddleton entered a moment after.

"Who was the man I met?" said he.

"Oh, my dear father," exclaimed Viola, highly agitated, as she flew into his arms, "I have been so frightened! I scarcely know what to say." And for some minutes she leaned on her father's shoulder, unable to command her speech.

- "Who has frightened you?"
- "That person-"
- "Whom, whom,-what was his name."
- "Schmidt—no, no,—Montrose,—Stanhope Montrose."

"Whom, said you?" exclaimed Mr. Myddleton, starting back: "Schmidt, Schmidt! It must be him:—I thought I recollected the face." And he rushed out to give the alarm; but the man had disappeared in the crowd, and all pursuit was, of course, hopeless.

Myddleton returned with the air of a distracted person.

"And you have been in the room with a murderer!" said he to his daughter. "He declared he was not one," replied Viola, weeping.

"He declared!—I dare say he did: he is the man that assisted—ha! he is the greatest scoundrel in existence." And the discovery of the will, his loss of property, name, fame, and all the concomitant circumstances recurred to his mind with appalling vividness.

"What wanted he with you? - Imprudent girl, to admit him; and worse, not to give the alarm!"

"He asked for money, and told me-"

"Money!—A proper fellow to come here for it!"

" And to say my poor cousin was innocent."

"A good authority, truly; but scarcely a credible one, I think. Remember, Mistress Viola Myddleton," continued her father, sternly, "he is pardoned, as I am to understand, and through your intercession: but no communication ever ensues between you more,—no renewal

of engagements: matters are now quite on a different footing."

"Inasmuch, sir," said Viola, recovering her spirit—" inasmuch as we formerly had all the money, and now he has it!"

"Child, you will drive me mad! I never cared about his having wealth. You know I never made that objection."

"Then, sir, you must remember that, although this was my mother's, you knew of no other; and now he is, by his Sovereign's pardon, declared innocent—"

" Not a bit of it."

"And by his own asseverations, which have much more weight with me: so that, sir, there really now exists no obstacle to our union."

"One word for all,-no renewal-"

"That I shall leave to him, sir."

"Then, madam, I shall not leave you to him, depend upon it: so you may prepare to quit London the day after to-morrow."

"Very well," said Viola, carelessly, deter-

mined that if she went she should be carried; and finding her father more resolute than she had ever before known him, she retired to her room for the remainder of the day.

The threats of Schmidt, and the awe of such a desperate character as he was accounted. weighed down her spirits to a depth that even the knowledge of her lover's safety, and the belief in his innocence, failed to buoy her up from. Much she dreaded that the casual mention of his name to her father would become known to him by some secret and mysterious channel, and the threatened vengeance wreaked upon her lover; nor, however heroic we may deem her, was she without some apprehensions for herself. She now wished that she had by any means furnished him with the money he required, to buy grace and favour, or soothe his malevolent disposition. "How, if he should waylay and murder Villiers!" Such dread forebodings solitude and grief suggest. But he had at present no such blood-thirsty intentions. He was one of those speculating ruffians who are content to bide their time; and there existed, moreover, a bond of social compact between him and Villiers, in the note of hand for ten thousand pounds, which was a sufficient insurance of life against ten times the provocation that Viola feared to have given, who, in the innocence of her heart, tried to forget the false address that Schmidt produced, dreading lest her father might force it from her, and some new troubles be the consequence.

CHAPTER XI.

"Twill be recorded for a precedent,

And many an error, by the same example,

Will rush into the state: it should not be."

Shakspeare.

A reprieve or pardon travels fast. On the morning following Viola's intercession with the King, the Knight Banneret was restored to liberty, and after acknowledging his gratitude for the kindness he had experienced while in durance, he betook himself to the road—in honest guise, be it always understood,—and travelled up to town, drawing consolation as he went from the knowledge that henceforward he might consider himself an ill-used man.

Lord Stair, from whom a letter had accompanied the order for his release, was the first person upon whom he called after his arrival in London, after having established himself in a comfortable house, taken upon the spur of the occasion near Hanover Square, as befitting the state of one who was soon to be known as the richest commoner in the county of ——.

We may pass over his interview with the Earl, and the congratulations of many friends whom he that day met with: their sincerity he much doubted. There was one, however, whose hand he grasped with lively satisfaction, and whom he was equally surprised to find waiting upon Lord Stair,—this was his fellow-soldier, Bohun. The work being apparently over in Germany, and little more glory to be reaped during the remainder of the campaign, desiring, besides, fervently to see Caroline Thornhill, he solicited leave of absence, and frankly told the General his motives; for Bohun's family was known to Lord Stair, and the young officer was not slow to avail himself of this advantage.

"She is without a protector," said he.

"You mean, doubtless, then, to offer yourself?" observed the Earl, dryly.

"No, my Lord; not exactly,-that is-"

"Not yet, you mean," said Stair, smiling.
"Faith, man, I believe you're farther north than
I took you for. You wish to ascertain first
what her father has left her!"

"You do me injustice, my Lord," replied Bohun, colouring, and looking withal as grand as a Lieutenant in presence of a Commanderin-Chief can possibly do. "I merely wish to offer my services in the arrangement of her affairs."

"Well, I will not be too hard upon you," returned the General; "but leave I cannot grant. However, if you choose to join my staff, and give up your regiment for a time, I will myself ask leave to take you with me to England, when I am sent to the right about, and then you will be your own master."

It is needless to say that Bohun was delighted with this plan; or that, following the fortunes of the Earl, he had left Germany with him, and was now merely paying a visit of reconnoisance.

It was here that Villiers first learnt to whom he was indebted for his life. Lord Stair had avoided saying more in his letter than that the King had been graciously pleased to pardon him: further particulars he would give on his arrival in London. But Charles was fully sensible of the gratitude that must be due to the Earl for his good offices, nor were his thanks wanting on the occasion. For Viola he reserved, however, the expression of those feelings that may not be described,—feelings which should be sacred from the garish eye of day, and the unhallowed research of man.

Who shall portray the workings of the human heart at such a moment? Even between the parties most nearly interested, more must of necessity be thought and allowed for than spoken. There is a silent eloquence which says, in a tenfold degree, all that tongue would mutilate by attempting to convey.

It might be, that in their first interview the subject would not be touched on by the lovers.

Villiers obtained from Lord Stair the Myddleton's address; nor was he surprised to find that they had avoided publicity by choosing their present abode. The visit over at the Earl's, he took Bohun's arm, and the two friends walked together for some distance along the Strand; albeit the route of one being Kensington, where lived Caroline Thornhill, with her distant relation,—this was a little out of his way. But they had much to talk over; and for convenience, possibly, took the north side of the street, as being less crowded, and going thus against the stream, were elbowed by every one they met.

They had reached Temple Bar, and were about to separate, when from a dark court on the eastern side of the gateway, appeared a jauntily-dressed foreign officer, in the uniform of an Hussar, bedecked with cross and ribbon. His bridle arm rested in a sling; he had, perhaps, received a wound at Dettingen; and by a long black patch across one cheek, it seemed that the enemy's sabre had gone far to spoil his personal beauty, as well as to disable the bodily powers. He wore his own hair, which was of the longest, and very dark, suiting ill with a fair complexion and grey eye; and amid the jingle and glitter, or under the mask of the bushy moustache, Villiers himself for the moment failed to discover in this warrior the redoubtable Hans Schmidt.

He stopped to accost our hero; and pouring forth a volume of German, dexterously glided into French, and slipped a card into his hand. The discourse went, as it was intended, for nothing,—the address, he hoped, would be consulted; and taking a huge pinch of snuff with the filthiest of fingers, which, when disengaged, twisted up his mustachios, he smiled, bowed, clattered his appointments, and departed.

"What a prodigious clic-clac! All spurs

and sabre;—a most fearful man of war!" said Bohun. "Who is he?"

" A German."

"So I suppose,—and not over cleanly, it seems. A Baron, of course?"

"You are right," replied Villiers, in some confusion. "Baron—the devil take his name! —Schaffenhausen."

"You are fortunate to have met him here," observed Bohun; "but we must part, and the rather that I see you are becoming an object of curiosity, having drawn away from the Baron half his train of admirers, which is unfriendly of you."

"Nay, then," said Villiers, in the same strain, and glad to be released, "you shall not share the honour. Adieu,—we meet to-morrow.—Commend me to your lady,"

Giving his late companion time to lose himself in the crowd, he crossed the street; and darting down the first alley that presented itself, stopped in the comparative solitude of an inn of court. Here, with the feeling of a guilty person, he took Schmidt's card from his pocket. On one side of this stood the name of Mr. Stanhope Montrose; but a pencil had been run across it, and Villiers turned to the reverse, where appeared a scribbled direction to an obscure café, in the neighbourhood of Leicester Fields, purporting to be kept by a German.

Whatever fascination could have thrown itself over Villiers, to draw him towards the vicinity of a man whom he so much loathed, it is useless to ask; such, however, was its power, that the Knight, on tearing and throwing away the bit of pasteboard, addressed himself to the task of discovering this amiable foreigner's abode. The dwelling of his mistress was near; yet, much as he desired to behold her once more, the magnetic influence of Schmidt prevailed. He stepped into a hackney-coach, and was soon put down at the door of the coffee-house, where the Prussian meeting him, led the way to a private room.

"Your business with me?" demanded Villiers, when they were enclosed in this gloomy, smoke-smelling apartment.

" Money!" replied Schmidt.

"I guessed as much," said Villiers, emptying his purse of all the gold it contained, which was immediately pocketed by the other.

"This trifle will not last long," said he:
"when am I to get the ten thousand?—for, to
tell you truth, noble Knight, my finances are
not the most flourishing, and I mean forthwith
to be on the wing, out of this cold-blooded
country."

"It seems too hot to hold you, nevertheless," said Villiers. "The money shall be paid, however, as soon as I have settled my affairs; and then I do hope, Mr. Schmidt—"

"Hush!" said the ruffian, holding up his finger. "Can you not

forget what I have been,
And sooth, remember what I must be now ?"

Villiers looked round, but the door was shut,

and the room empty. He became impatient, and made a demonstration of rising humour.

" Swell'st thou, proud heart?"

said Schmidt.

"'Nay, prithee, good my lord, be patient.
I'll change my gay apparel for an almsman's gown;'
for, to say truth, I cannot appear two days in
the same guise."

"Where get you the means?" said Villiers.

"Credit is better than money," replied Schmidt;" but to be serious, Sir Charles, name not my name again, or I may chance to find more in your country than I look for—

A little grave,
A little, little grave,
an obscure grave."

"You may be buried in the King's highway," said Villiers, "to quote your favourite poet,—but give me the memorandum, and I will replace it with one that shall ensure you the money at a certain date; when I desire that I may never hear of, as after this I trust I may never see you more."

Villiers received the scrap of paper, and wrote an order for the sum agreed on; during which time Schmidt continued his strain.

"Psha!" exclaimed the former, impatiently:
"Can you not hold your tongue one minute?"

""

Well, well, I see I talk but idly,
And you mock at me!"

returned the Prussian. "But why so gloomy, fair sir?

'Rich men are sad—and yet

Methiaks nobody should be sad but I.'"

"I hope your warrant will bear out the deed!" concluded Schmidt, as he looked carefully over the paper, and bestowed it in the greasy pouch of old. "But I had much to tell you of, and to ask. You have not dealt fairly with me on your trial; but let that pass,—I have news for your private ear. Miss Myddleton,—Ha!—methinks you start at that name; yet—

What's in a name?

and cetera. Well, but I forgot-I have been

something too slender in my hospitality—will you not refresh? We'll see what "my poor castle" may afford, as Will hath it,—nothing?—a little table-beer and a toast?"

"Nothing, nothing," said Villiers. "What of that lady,—I have no patience to hear more of Shakspeare."

"'To think, my lord, if you delight not in the man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you!'—but as regards this 'one fair daughter'—I have seen her."

" You have seen Miss Myddleton?"

"Yes, and I'll tell you the manner of it and something more. By the way, a cool hundred, and the picture you wot of is yours."

"Bring it me," said Villiers, eagerly, "and I will pay what is reasonable. How heard you of it?"

"More of that anon. Miss Myddleton will be carried off from you to-morrow, unless you carry her off yourself to-day. The old fool Anthony is a sworn crony of a waterman I use: my certy, but she starts for Germany to-

" Are you sure ?"

"Sure!—aye, as the devil's in Cheapside!"
The Colonel looked aghast.

" Alas!-how is't with you?""

said Schmidt, seizing his hand.

"That thus you bend your eye on vacancy,

And with the corporal air do hold discourse?"

"Away!" cried Villiers, dashing out of the room. "This is our last meeting for ever, recollect."

"But the picture,—the—ha, ha, ha—a ladder of ropes, and a—ha, ha—I'll after him, by the lud,—he'll want my assistance: I must still be his fidus Achates!"

Schmidt checked himself.

"But, soft! The Capulets be abroad,—the Dogberries of the law;—a plague of all their houses, from Bow Street downwards!"

And the worthy Prussian threaded the mazy way towards his lodgings, where, divesting his face of the moustache, and changing his dress for one of comparative poverty, he again strode forth.

"Permit me to say, sir, that you are treading on my toes," objurgated an elderly gentleman, in the gloomy side-passage that admitted Villiers to the Myddletons' apartments, as he was let in by a shop-boy.

The Colonel stepped quietly back, by no means wishing to detain the father of his mistress from the walk he proposed to himself; and the one made his egress as the other his ascent.

Villiers was too sudden. The appearance of him whom she had once, as it were, numbered with the dead, had nearly overthrown the nerves of Viola altogether; but her mind, stronger than that of most women, bore up against the shock; and after some minutes of silence, during which she had almost passed away into another world, life re-asserted its pre-

eminence over temporary death, and she recovered strength and composure sufficient to understand the reality.

It was fortunate; for the recital of her interview with Schmidt, which Villiers drew from her upon the hint of that ruffian, threw him into so violent a fit of passion, that, as he raved in madness at the insult she had endured, the Colonel became as nearly delirious, and as little sensible of his words or actions as herself had been but the few moments before. Roused to fury, Villiers swore with his clenched hand raised, that no consideration should now prevent him from consigning Schmidt into the hands of the law, where, at the least, for his numerous frauds and villanies, if he escaped condign punishment for the death of Gibbons, he would be banished from a country to which his birth was a disgrace, and where he had ever crawled, reptile like, through the degraded existence of many years.

Viola tried, in vain, to pacify him; and, re-

membering the threat of the determined wretch, while not free from fears that by some secret channel he might too soon know the intentions of Villiers, she, in addition, dreaded the appearance of her mother; for the loudness with which he declaimed could not, it might well be thought, long fail of informing Mrs. Myddleton of the presence of her nephew,—a fact she as yet remained ignorant of.

In the midst of this, the announcement he had heard that his mistress was the next day to be torn from him, and taken to a far land, suddenly recurred to his mind, and, on the instant, he became the personification of patient endurance. It was evident to Viola that he was working himself into the calmness of desperation. A vast effort to concentrate all his powers for the achievement of some great purpose was apparent, and, taking the hand of her he valued above anything this world could bestow, he demanded if she had firmness sufficient to reply to the questions he was about to put.



"Well, Viola, have you made your election?"

She burst into a violent flood of tears, and, holding out one hand to him, while she shaded her face with the other, turned away her head.

"Indeed,-indeed I cannot!" she protested.

"Then stay," cried Villiers; and he flung her from him. "We part for ever—for ever, Viola!"

"Nay, nay; not for ever: wait but for my father's return," exclaimed she, distractedly.

He stopped.

She threw herself imploringly on her knees. He raised her in his arms, and carried her from the room.

He was strong and active, and he bore Viola quickly down the murky staircase, and, opening the street-door, half led, half carried her to the coach that still waited for him, not unquestioned, however, or unopposed by an old servant, who had placed himself so as to obstruct his passage. Villiers pushed past, and bore down all opposition.

"Come with me, Anthony," he continued:

"your young mistress shall have your protection
as well as mine."

The astonished servant, irresolute as to the part he should take, was decided by Viola, who, after having allowed herself to be placed in the coach, beckoned the old domestic to accompany her.

A mob of idle gazers had assembled during the few minutes occupied in these arrangements

"There was nothing else for it," said Villiers to himself, as justifying in thought what he had done.

"Drive on towards Kensington," were his orders to the coachman. He would place Viola with Caroline Thornhill and her relative, and then beseech Lord Stair for his help in forwarding the matrimonial project he had resolved on.

The little crowd of curious people was nearly cleared, when the progress of the fugitives was stopped by an accumulation of vehicles at Temple Bar, which could only proceed each way, one by one, at a funeral pace. Here again, without knowing the cause for curiosity, a perfect mob collected round the coach of Villiers, and in so crowded a thoroughfare but few minutes sufficed to bring hundreds to its increase. Amid the hootings and jeers that these indulged in, was now heard an expostulatory voice, well known by our hero to be that of Schmidt.

He had been drinking, and now ascended the hind foot-board, and commenced an harangue to the mob. The few nerveless police endeavoured to disperse them, but none regarded their efforts.

"Aye!" shouted the Prussian, now divested of the moustache, and his dress changed to that of a countryman, "disperse, my brave fellows. This is the gallant Sir Charles Villiers, my best friend, the poor man's friend;" and the mob shouted. "He is going to be married:" again they raised a shout. "He bled for you at Dettingen:" another cry. "And," concluded he, "he has just come in for his rights,—cash,

my boys, cash that a rich old miser has kept him out of these twenty years!" A deafening hurrah succeeded.

"Let him pass, let him pass; keep clear there!" cried many men.

And the coach crept on a few paces, while Anthony, trembling with anxiety and consternation, vainly tried to make himself heard from the box.

"Who is this fellow?" said a stout constable, determinately advancing to drag the orator down, but unsupported by his comrades.

"It is the villain,—the murdering Schmidt.

A hundred pounds are on his head!" exclaimed

Anthony.

"Schmidt, Schmidt!" The name ran like a scattering fire of musketry through the dense crowd: it was instantly in every body's mouth. The stout constable grappled with and hurled him down; but the surrounding men seemed paralyzed,—it was the name of a reputed monster: all drew back to gaze. Viola screamed with affright, while Villiers eagerly tried to open the door and descend. In vain. He was furious, and thrust his head out of the window.

"Seize him!—seize the desperate villain!" cried he, remembering only his insult to Viola.

A rush was made by fifty ruffians, who threw themselves in a mass upon Schmidt, and with drawn swords—for they were gentlemen of his clique,—rescued him from the only constable who had resolution to approach.

"I will be revenged, if it were to cost me ten lives!" madly exclaimed he, foaming with rage, and shaking his fist at Villiers and Anthony.

"Execrable dog, I defy you!" cried Sir Charles, as the friends of the ruffian dragged him away, and hurried down a dark court, while some score of them formed a sort of rearguard, effectually keeping all pursuers at bay.

" Drive !" said Villiers. " Every minute's delay loses you a crown."

The coachman lashed his wretched horses into the first gallop they had known for months, and, soon clearing the crowd, made direct for the house at Kensington which Bohun had described as being the residence of Caroline and her relation. Arrived, Villiers prayed the protection of those ladies for Viola, and having promised a full explanation to Miss Thornhill, and a quick return, he prepared to depart for Lord Stair's. As he met Anthony in the passage, he took him into a side-room, and closed the door.

"What do you mean to do?" said he, peremptorily.

"Sir, what is in my power—what can I do?"
returned the old servant. "You have taken
away my young mistress from her home, and
I suppose mean to marry her."

"At a word—of course," said Villiers, impatiently. "To-morrow she will be my wife, cost what it may. You have it in your power to cause vexation, by informing her parents of her present abode, but you cannot prevent our marriage. But it is absurd my talking to you in this strain. Can you hold your tongue; and will you rest quiet?"

"I can, and will."

"It is fortunate for you to have made this determination, or I—but never mind. Let this console you till my return."

Villiers put some gold pieces into his hand; but the old man shook his head, and, turning away to conceal his emotion, placed the money on a table.

"Never, Mr. Charles!" said he. "Can you think so badly of me? No, no: you mistake my feelings. I have known her from a child—"

"I have, indeed, done you injustice," said-Villiers, darting towards him; and, as he took the gold from off the table with one hand, he grasped the old servant's with the other. "Wait, then," he continued. "Stay in your own country, and the lodge at Burnel shall be yours for life, or any other part of it. Protect her, and serve her

AMBOR reacti-dect He was gi Sar ir sa ee 20 ibe ज़रकार्य केर । - Take 12 r well done : Villiers th कंडिलर्स्ट व्य क्यां The Earl se pekkint yn Cp turned his chai Knight - It is to pron rude." said Stair,

"Sir," replied 1

This little interruption had, however, the end desired by Lord Stair, who now listened attentively to his discourse.

"You wish me to give away the bride?" said the Earl, as Sir Charles concluded.

"That is my greatest ambition, and—" He was stopped by Stair.

"I am perfectly alive to the compliment," said he, "and much flattered; but however willing I may feel to perform this office, there is another to whom it of right belongs still in England:—what say you to her father?"

"He has not been unthought of by me," replied Villiers; "but it rests not with him: and the keeper of his conscience is, I fear, inflexible."

"Do not despair," said the Earl. "I have already, I trust, proved that my friendship for your father was not merely 'a name.' But leave this matter to me. I cannot think that Mr. Myddleton will be deaf to the commands of royalty."

"Think of his wife, my Lord," said Villiers, with a smile.

"True," said Stair: "I have heard that she has somewhat the dominion. We must not, however, lose sight of the old proverb of my country, when we think how we should manage our own spouses:— Bachelor's wives, and auld maid's bairns, are sye the best guided!"

"Come, my Lord," returned Sir Charles, laughing, "I may still insist upon our English powerb of "the grey mare."

"Take care, take care," interrupted the Earl, holding up a finger: "this time twenty years, though I shall not live to see it, you may wince at the subject."

Villiers shook his head with an air of confidence.

"As yet 'our withers are unwrung,' " said he; "but pray, my Lord,—I hope it is not true that you give up your regiment?"

"Idle rumour,—idle rumour," said Stair, smiling at this strange association of ideas.— "No: my gracious Sovereign would scarcely permit such, even if it were proposed to him;" much less would he himself devise a thing of the kind now, although we have sometimes been upon indifferent terms of late. How busy are little-minded people to widen that breach between a King and his servant, which they hope will allow themselves an entrance*! But return, and depend on hearing from me the instant I have anything to communicate. In the mean time I would not be unprepared."

Villiers departed. Leave we him to make all necessary arrangements for the impending marriage, while we return to the silk-mercer's, where, in the course of the afternoon, stood a royal coach ready to convey Mrs. Myddleton to St. James's. We may imagine at whose instance, and for what purpose. We pass over the affliction and distress naturally caused by the event, which she soon learnt. It was long

^{*} Twice or thrice was it the fortune of Lord Stair to lose his regiment, the Scots Greys, on account of political intractability, and as often to find it presented to him again, either by the King, as a reward for past services, or by the minister, in the hope of commanding his suffrage and interest.

ere the lady had summoned sufficient steadiness of nerve to comply with the King's command; but at length, being duly adorned, she stepped into the carriage, and was driven rapidly to the Palace.

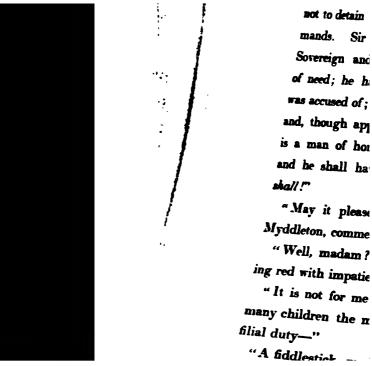
Mrs. Myddleton was at length in George's presence. The Princesses Amelia and Caroline, also, and the Earl of Stair, with several noblemen of the court, were around.

The King, who from obstinacy was quite as likely to insist upon a measure when opposed as from really caring whether it was carried into execution or not, for any gratification it afforded himself, now declared that "it should be;" for we may divine the subject of his conversation with the mother of the bride elect.

Although a gallant Prince, he was not that day in a very dignified, or more than usually patient, humour. He had been worried with political differences amongst his ministers, and was fatigued with receiving addresses on his safe return, some of which, by the way, were a little too flattering, and much too exclusive, giving all the credit of the day to his single exertions*.

Mrs. Myddleton, nothing daunted by feeling herself in the royal presence, was nevertheless weakened and agitated by the morning's occurrence; and, although she exhibited great reluctance to accede to the will of the Monarch, there was less firmness than ordinary in her deportment. She hesitated and faltered. The story of the will, with its embellishments, had made its effect on the court circle to such a degree, that most people shunned her as a venomous creature. Lord Lincoln, the lord in waiting, compassionately gave her his arm, and supported her, half fainting as she was, till the King had finished.

^{*} That from Berwick-upon-Tweed, after eulogising the victor of Dettingen, proceeds thus,—" Our joy was proportionate, on this occasion, to the real concern we were under for the safety of your Majesty's person, exposed to the precarious event of a battle, when the indiscriminate ball might have determined the fate of Europe, and exposed a headless army to fall a prey to their merciless enemies."



not to detain mands. Sir Sovereign and of need; he h was accused of; and, though app is a man of hor and he shall ha "May it please Myddleton, comme " Well, madam? ing red with impatie " It is not for me half-command in his attitude, while his hands played with some gold pieces in his long-flapped waistcoat pockets, "I trust, madam, you will not refuse yours; and tell your husband this from me—I love not much talking,—but, once for all, I expect that he is ready to give away the bride at eight o'clock to-morrow evening, at our chapel of St. James's."

He had raised his voice to a height of which he was not himself conscious, as he concluded this speech; and, turning away from Mrs. Myddleton, he now left the room, while, with a dry eye but a bursting heart, the lady suffered herself to be led to her carriage, Lord Lincoln, now seconded by a brother peer, not relaxing in his kind offices till he had resigned her into the hands of her own attendants; for Stair, with a natural horror of one whose conduct he had heard a full account of from Villiers, kept, as did the others, far aloof from the chance of contact with her.

For Villiers, he had made all the arrange-

ments possible for the approaching ceremony; and, inducing Bohun to accompany him to the house he had taken near Hanover Square, they sat up the greater part of the night talking over the past, present, and future.

CHAPTER XII.

" A bridegroom, say you?"

SHAKSPEARE.

" Now tell me, sir, who helped you to your rights :-Was't I ?- Has't cost you aught !-" ANON.

THE flambeaux flashed through the pitchy darkness of a November evening, and glared upon the gorgeously laced liveries of the footmen who attended a royal coach in waiting to convey the bride from Kensington to the chapel of St. James's.

Not long did Viola keep in suspense those who attended to herald her on her way. Caroline Thornhill, who had for that day put off her mourning, a fragile though not less lovely being, led her into the drawing-room as the last becoming fold of her lace veil, and the accustomed bouquet had completed her bridal attire.

" On she came____"

graceful and noble,—and as she stopped, a faint smile illumined her face, which was paled by all she had of late gone through.

A lady in waiting, despatched by the Princess Amelia, led her to the carriage, while Caroline bore her train in quality of bridesmaid. As the coach drove off with its fair and jewelled freight, Villiers, by appointment, stepped into his own, and, attended by Bohun, passed rapidly down George Street towards the chapel. Both officers wore the full court dress of the Life Guards. A third carriage at the same time advanced along the Strand, in which was the father of Viola, brought rather as a victim to the altar than a willing official who was to assist at the sacrifice.

As the whole party met at once in a side room, Viola threw herself at the feet of her parent, and clasped his hand; -it was a severe, a bitter moment for her, nor did Myddleton suffer less. With streaming eyes he raised the weeping girl from the floor, and pressed her to his heart. The absence of Mrs. Myddleton could scarcely pass unnoticed by the rest; but if Viola looked for her with anxiety, this was not without some mixture of satisfaction that she had escaped here, and in comparative publicity, a first meeting with an offended and a dreaded parent. She had erred-and yet she sought to persuade herself that blame was not so wholly to be cast on her: Villiers had been the cause of her undutiful conduct-he it was who had forced her away-who had by stratagem or by violence accomplished a separation between herself and those to whom she owed her being, and who claimed from her the strictest accordance with their minutest wish.

For a moment, and a moment only, this train of reasoning succeeded, and while she confessed the truth of her having broken the sacred obligation which binds a child to the will of a parent, apprehension, nerves, and perhaps a little repentance, awakened these reflections in her mind. But the feeling, however good, we inar was only momentary; one instant sufficed to impel that revulsion of the heart, as uncontrollable as it is sudden. There stood before her the man who had been true in his affection through sorrow, difficulty, and danger; who had risked all, even life itself, rather than publicly avow the truth of a transaction, which, if understood in its every detail, must have overwhelmed ber family with shame: even with all his care too much had transpired to admit of her absent parent's rejoining those circles in which she had before held a distinguished place; -disgrace, infamy, would attach if fairly known :- Oh, it was too harrowing to think of this!-And had not Viola obtained his pardon for a fancied crime. -saved life and honour, -and could he be valueless in her eyes after all that had passed-all she had done to rescue him from an ignominous and unjust fate? Never, never! His she was and would be through good and evil; and, while she tried to shut out former thoughts, she clasped closer the arm of her father, who, unconscious of, or misinterpreting the action, fervently returned the pressure. With a determination to rush and seek forgiveness of her other parent, immediately the marriage ceremony was concluded, she allowed the mind to wander into temporary forgetfulness of all but the passing scene.

Alas! she knew not that at this moment her mother lay in the agonies of death. Husband and daughter gone, and even now, thought the unhappy woman, employed in the achievement of that hateful compact which all the energies of her life had been exerted to prevent for so many years! The indignity, the scorn of the world,—all that must ensue—the King's insulting manner,—all that had been done or said, clung to her fears and recollections like a poisoned web,—her soul withered under its blasting influence, and she died in a paroxysm of grief and bitterness, in

which every concentrated ill passion mingled its unholy breath.

Villiers stood silent and abstracted; but the tremulous motion of his lip, as, with an elbow resting on the crossed arm, his fingers unconsciously played with a locket that hung from his neck, showed him no unmoved participator in the scene.

The lady in waiting surrendered up her charge, and the wedding party moved towards the altar. As Mr. Myddleton led Viola past Villiers he extended his hand towards one who was to become the husband of her for whom only the father now retained any affection; a paternal love that was proportionately deep and engrossing to the coldness with which he regarded all the world beside; for he had long since ceased even to feign attachment to his wife. He was about to give away his most precious treasure, and to part, it might be for ever,—to seclude himself in a foreign land, and hide his head in perpetual banishment, for a

fault of which he had never been aware till the whelming conviction of his wife's errors came upon him with the suddenness of a thunderbolt.

Villiers raised to his lips the proffered hand.

* * * * * * *

The parties were soon standing at the altar. The chapel was brilliantly lit up for the occasion; but the wedding party were all who appeared at the communion-steps. The Bishop of ———, assisted by a chaplain, stood ready to perform the ceremony. He commenced the service in a deep, impressive voice, but had reached no further than that awful appeal which thrills through all hearts, denouncing concealment of any known impediment, as it shall be answered for hereafter, when Viola remembered her solemn compact, and wept aloud. A tremor shook her whole frame, as if some guilty fear had found an entrance to the pure temple of her breast. But Villiers comforted, and re-assured

her with a look; for he knew her thoughts. The locket and the bracelet had been exchanged that morning, and he saw the latter now glisten upon her wrist. Summoning up all her firmness, she raised her eyes to the prelate, who continued; while from behind there entered noiselessly a brilliant train. It was the royal family, attended by Lord Stair, and several of the court.

The service concluded, and the King threw a necklace of magnificent diamonds over the wrist of Lady Villiers, leaving her bridesmaid to double round and clasp it.

"What may your name be, my pretty mistress?" said the Sovereign, addressing Caroline.

"Thornhill, may it please your Majesty," said the blushing girl, with a low and graceful curtsey.

"Thornhill?" said the King, "Thornhill? yes, madam, it does please me, and much; for it is the name of a faithful servant and a brave man." Caroline burst into tears.

The Sovereign held back, astonished; but presently spoke aside to Stair, and then to the Princesses; but what his communication was must rest a secret for ever. The good old Earl looked grave and smiled by turns; and after took Bohun by the arm, drawing him away from the bridesmaid, to whose side he had suddenly moved.

The royal train had departed, and Villiers exultingly led his bride to the door. They were to sup at the house of Lord Stair, where a party was invited to do them honour, and from whence they were to repair to a villa of the Earl's (pardon the phrase, gentles), which had been suddenly prepared for the reception of the happy couple by an order of the previous day.

The bride, bathed in tears, leaned towards her husband, whispering some nearly inarticulate request. "It is impossible, Viola!" was the reply. "Absurd, my love—it cannot be," he continued, bending away, and regarding her with amazement, while she by looks continued to urge her plea; but the violence of her sobs choked further utterance, and Villiers led her from the group to gain composure. It was a melancholy marriage!

Some confusion amongst the carriages prevented the Knight's from getting up immediately, and he stood with the trembling Viola upon the steps, exposed to the gaze of a multitude of people who had gathered round.

At length the splendid vehicle drew up, and Villiers placed his bride therein; when, as he was about to follow, a pistol was fired at him from the crowd. The assassin was immediately seized by the two sentinels, who held him, pinioned, despite of all the efforts of his adherents to rescue him; nor were there on this occasion wanting true men to rush in and assist in the capture of the assassin, who, as we

may surmise, was no other than the notorious Schmidt.

Villiers was unhurt; the ball had passed him, and lodged harmless in a window-sill above: but the screams of women and the cries of men mingled with the execrations of the intended murderer, and sounded fearfully through the gloom of night. The struggles of Schmidt were this time useless: his friends deserted him, and he remained now unresisting in the hands of the constables, but gnashing his teeth in all the rage of disappointed vengeance. His fate was certain.

As they dragged him away to prison, Villiers leaped lightly into the coach; and, with his bride, in all the agitation of thankfulness for such an escape, was soon out of hearing of the tumult.

Some short time after the occurrence of all these important events, it chanced that as Sir Charles and Lady Villiers, with their guest, Caroline Thornhill, sat together at Burnel Royal, Bohun entered the room, bearing in his hand a small parcel, which he had brought with him from town.

"You have executed my commission, I see," said Viola, bounding forward to meet him, and taking the pacquet, which she concealed in her work; while her husband sat in mute surprise, forgetting at the moment to welcome his friend.

"What mystery is this?" he demanded, with a smile, as rising he attempted to take possession of the parcel. "Come," continued he, "we will have no secrets now!"

"Pardon me, but we will," replied the lady; and a playful struggle ensued, in which, of course, she was allowed to conquer.

"The Life Guards are beaten!" said Bohun.

"For the first time, then," replied Miss Thornhill, defending the honour of the corps.

The gentlemen made each a profound bow.

" Now, tell me, fair Caroline," said Villiers,
" what may all this mean?"

- "At the expense of offending you?"
- "Even so; and fear not her ladyship, who stands in a threatening attitude, I see, with finger raised."
- "To-morrow, then," said Caroline, "you will be seven-and-twenty!"
 - "I am still in the dark."
- "Let these enlighten you, then," said Viola, half vexed, as she displayed to his view the diamonds that encircled his mother's picture, which, intending as a birth-day present, she had requested Bohun to find, and bring down with him.

"This deserves some return," said Villiers, after having examined it for a space in silence; when, taking from the drawer of an Indian cabinet a sealed paper, he threw a glance of meaning towards his wife, and put it into her hand.

Viola comprehended, and immediately transferred it, with much grace, to Bohun, whom she entreated to peruse its contents when alone. The young Captain, for such he was, unresistingly complied; and after exchanging a few words with Caroline, withdrew, to find himself, by the liberality of his friends, master of all the property which had belonged to Ludlow.

The Princess Amelia, at the King's desire, had taken Miss Thornhill under her peculiar protection; and as she kindly tasked herself to forward the match between the lovers, it waited only the expiration of Caroline's mourning to achieve.

END OF VILLIERS.

SOME PASSAGES

IN

THE LIFE

OP

JOHN, SECOND EARL OF STAIR.

WITH A SKETCH OF HIS TIMES.

At the present day, when justice is at least done to the dead, if not to the living, hero, it seems remarkable that no very complete or comprehensive memoir should exist of a man who was the idol of his time. Such is, however, the fact; and although there have been lives of this distinguished commander at various times penned, we are still in want of one that



The family of Dalrymple is more particularly remarkable for having produced good and talented lawyers and able statesmen. It was reserved for the subject of our memoir to add the renown of high military attributes to his family name. His father was chiefly instrumental in bringing about the Scottish union; and we find three Dalrymples in the commission upon that momentous affair.

John Dalrymple, second Earl of Stair, was born in 1673. Although early intended for the bar, he evinced the most decided predilection for the profession of arms; and, yielding to his wishes, the paternal care consigned him to a friend in Holland, attached to the court of William. Here he not only attracted the notice of that prince, but enjoyed the far greater advantage of becoming a pupil to Cohorn, the celebrated engineer; nor did his military studies interfere to the prejudice of literary pursuits.

His family were amongst the early reformers, and the descendants equally distinguished for

their zeal in the Protestant cause. The grandfather of Stair, Sir John Dalrymple, filled the office of Lord President in 1671,-an appointment given him for his acknowledged abilities as a lawyer. In 1682, his patriotic conduct in regard to the Test Act so offended the court, that he was removed from his office without any cause being publicly assigned. He retired to his country-house; but receiving a hint that he was still in danger of imprisonment, while his tenants were harassed as non-conformists, he crossed to Holland, where, in the end of that year, he printed his Philosophia Nova Experimentalis. In 1688 he returned to his own country with the Prince of Orange; but is said to have first taken the freedom to ask his Highness what his true intentions were in going to England: to which the Prince answered, that "he designed the glory of God. and the security of the Protestant religion ." He

Sir John is reported to have made an immediate tender of his services in the following singular manner: pulling off

was created a Viscount by William, in 1689, and restored to his employments. He died in 1695, and was succeeded by his son.

The young Dalrymple, inheriting the principles of his father and grandsire, attached himself to the fortunes of William, with whom he served as a volunteer in the Life Guards, in Ireland, during the year 1691. He was probably employed in the wars which the King afterwards prosecuted on the continent; but there is little to guide us in this particular.

In 1702 he was appointed a Lieutenant-Colonel of the third Foot Guards, and served as a volunteer in the Netherlands, greatly distinguishing himself at the sieges of Venloo and Liege. He was then put upon the Staff of the Duke of Marlborough, in quality of Aide-decamp, was present with him at Blenheim, and afterwards given the command of the Scots

his wig, and pointing to his head, he exclaimed, "Though I be now in the seventieth year of mine age, yet I am willing to venture this, and my own and children's fortune in such an undertaking."

Greys. At Ramillies he led a brigade of infantry; and served also as a Brigadier at Oudenarde, the news of which buttle he brought to England. At Malphaquet he again disinguished himself. He commanded as Major-General at the capture of Peer, where he was again eminently distinguished, and as Lieutenant-General at that of Douay, in 1710. He was now honoured with the order of the Thistle, which had, in 1703, been restored by the Queen.

Having succeeded his father as Earl of Stair, upon the death of that nobleman in 1707, he was elected one of the sixteen representative peers in the fifth, sixth, and seventh parliaments of Great Britain.

Although Stair is described as having been on the Staff of Marlborough for a time, we believe that he was more particularly the pupil of Prince Eugene. Either of these were perfect masters in the art of war; and, with intelligence and intrepidity, such as Stair's, the seeds of his early education were not thrown away upon an

ungrateful soil: a proof of this exists in the brilliant reputation which attended him through all the encounters of that day, and the laurels which graced his aged brow at Dettingen.

Never, perhaps, was there a school so calculated to form excellent soldiers in theory, as that which was carried on in the Low Countries during the early part of the last century. For practice, the great battles above named, and the different series of successful operations, speak for themselves. Forcing the Bavarian lines at Donawerth, the French near Namur, and again the French near Bouchain, the sieges of Dendermonde, Ghent, Venloo, Lisle, Tournay, and many others where the skill of Vauban required all the counter-science of a finished proficient to avail, marked the character of the times. The passage of the Scheldt must not, either, be forgotten; and, in short, in every affair except the bloody and indecisive battle of Malplaquet, where the hazard of the attack was infinitely too great, the reputation of the allied generals, and particularly of



was abandoned; for the French passed instead of investing a fortified place, and the fortress fell, of course. Or, if this held out, it was of little consequence, since an army of occupation sat down before it, while the enemy's force in the field was separated and amused by the celerity of Napoleon, and thus beaten in detail. Numbers, also, often mastered skill, and the reckless sacrifice of column after column, made the wished-for impression, when the master-mind of Napoleon was brought into play, and completed the victory.

The school, then, in which Stair was initiated was one of theory, in the hands of professors who knew to apply most perfectly their rules to practice, and who were also aware of the necessity of meeting their opponents with one particular system. The disadvantages and vexations under which the Duke laboured, from the intractable, uncertain, or phlegmatic interpositions and delays of the allies, it is not ours to

defend. So also the avanca of eternal siegus

every social qualification most polite and amiable. His smile was truly fascinating; and, indeed, he had a countenance so full of sweetness, that one could not but admire and love him the moment he appeared."

In treating of his political career, we shall be as concise as possible.

On the conclusion of the wars of Marlborough, he showed no disinclination to enter into the struggles of the period; but although he took a decided line in the performance of his parliamentary duties, he disdained the thraldom of a leader in opposition, as well as the domination of a minister. His conscience was unfettered as his vote, and he could never be brought to sacrifice the one to the other at the call of party, let who might stand at the helm of the state. From Marlborough he differed in this, that whereas the Duke, although the head of the Whigs, yet by all the means in his power aided the cause of the Pretender, Stair, whose family was devoted to the Protestant ascendancy, never rested



father, these have little to do with to son; and having premised this, we serting the republican Fletcher of Sa Barl, upon the previous Treaty of presented a scheme which savoured republican principles. He afterwas article, endeavoured to prove that to sary to prevent the consequences enable the nation to defend its right ministers of state from giving bade and to screen the people from tyran Bari of Stair having argued against replied that "it was no wonder he had such an act subsisted, his lordship

for the bad counsel he had given to l cern he had in the massacre of Glen

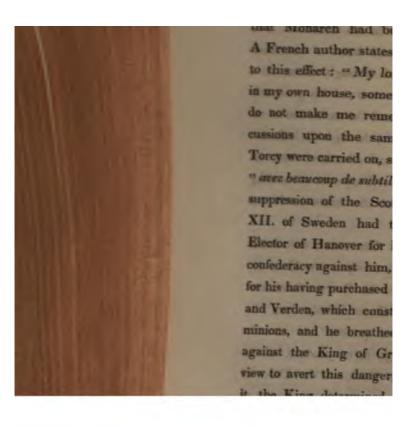
since the revolution."—Smollett, vol.

This is strong language, and su justly or unjustly applied in that institowards our Earl. The politics of Liregarded as a purification of his fat pronounce his attaching himself so Wales, in after-times, during the ruy son, as the most decided instance of it showed, though many examples might cannot deny that a soreness of mind.

In the latter end of Queen Anne's reign, Stair opposed the measures of the Court, and was, for the first time, deprived of his regiment; but on the accession of George I. he was restored to the command, made a lord of the bed-chamber, and sworn of the privy council. As the French King was said to protract the demolition of Dunkirk, and to have failed in stopping the progress of the canal of Mardyke, articles agreed to in the treaty of Utrecht, Prior the poet, then ambassador to Versailles, received orders to present a memorial to hasten their fulfilment. The answer which he received being deemed equivocal, this minister was recalled, and the Earl of Stair sent in his room, who prosecuted the affair with uncommon vigour*. So earnestly, indeed, did he insist on the performance of these agreements, and so indignant was he at the want of faith displayed by the

apright and patriotic; or wherever his policy was sufficiently clear and marked to admit of his support.

^{*} Smollett, vol. ii. p. 302.



and Commons to understand that he had constituted "his beloved son, the Prince of Wales," guardian of the kingdom in his absence. The Duke of Argyle, who had been a strenuous supporter of George, and through whom, in a great measure, the Monarch owed his peaceable accession to the throne, and the extinction of the Scottish rebellion, was now, through the influence of party zeal, disgraced and dismissed from all his employments, General Carpenter succeeding him in the command of the forces in North Britain.

In July the King left Gravesend, and, landing in Holland, passed incognito to Hanover. His object was to secure his German dominions from the Swede, and Great Britain from the Pretender. These two princes had already begun to form a design, in conjunction, of invading the kingdom. He knew the Duke of Orleans was resolved to ascend the throne of France, in case the young King, a sickly child, should die without male issue. The Regent

was not ignorant of Philip of Spain's views, as we have already sufficiently recounted in the foregoing tale; and he was glad of an opportunity to strengthen his interest by an alliance with the two great maritime powers, England and Holland. A negotiation was therefore carried forward to this effect by General Cadogan for England, the Pensionary Heinsius for the States-general, and the Abbé Dubois for France*. The Regent readily complied with all their demands.

* The Abbe was the son of a poor apothecary at Brive, in Limousin, and having good natural talents, which were tolerably cultivated, and a very plausible and pliant disposition, be became tutor to the Duc de Chartres, afterwards Orleans, and ultimately prime minister of France. His great ambition was to equal Richelieu and Mazarin in reputation; but, though gifted with every bose quality that these men may have possessed, he was deficient in the greater attributes by which they were, particularly Richelieu, distinguished.

The following is from St. Simon, who was, however, always his bitter enemy; and if there were not other evidences of his being "le vil, le méprisable Dubois" that he styles him, we should receive his testimony with caution. "Cet Abbe," says the Duke, "était un petit homme maigre, effilé, à mine de fouine. Tous les vices, la perfidie, l'avarice, la débauche, l'ambition, la basse flatterir, combattaient en lui d qui demeurerait le maître.

After the conclusion of this triple alliance, it was resolved to send Lord Stair once more to Il mentait jusqu'à nier effrontément, étant pris sur le fait, Malgré un bégaiement fuctice, auquel il s'était accoutumé, pour se donner le temps de pénétrer les autres, sa conversation instructive, ornée, insinuante, l'aurait fait rechercher, si tout cela n'eut été obscurci par une fumée de fausseté qui lui sortait de tous les pores, et faisait que sa gaiété attristait."

St Simon affirms that the Abbé learnt Cellamare's plot from one Buvat, a conspirator, who betrayed it to him. When this man claimed a reward for his intelligence, Dubois thus accested him:—"Have you the impudence to ask such a thing? You whose account of my mission to England is such a complication of injuries and lies? Begone: this very gazette that I hold in my hand would be evidence enough to hang you,—you are too happy to escape the cord!" Another account says that the Abbé drew it from a mistress of Orleans, La Fillon, who had discovered it to the Regent a day or two before, but that he took no notice of it. Another gives it to Lord Stair; but every man in Paris probably gave the particular version of the affair that best pleased him.

On the death of the Archbishop of Paris, Dubois, then only an Abbé, boldly asked the Regent for the vacancy. "Toi Archeveque!" exclaimed the Prince; "et qui oserat seulement te faire prêtre?" Nevertheless, he lived to wear a cardinal's hat.

He is said to have amused George I. and the Pretender with the like professions to each, promising one that his enemy should be kept harmless, and the other that he should soon regain the throne of his ancestors.

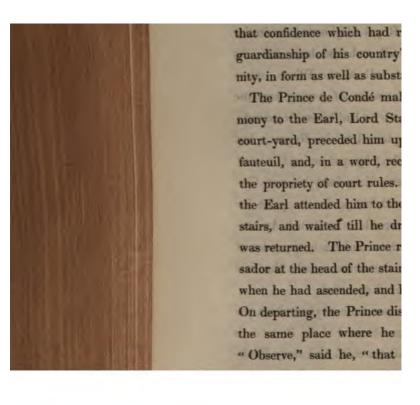
The overweening vanity of the Cardinal caused his death. At a review of the household troops he chose to appear on Versailles, where he held the post of Minister-Plenipotentiary. Of his perfect fitness to fill this office there is not a doubt; his graceful and easy manner, his wit, his accomplished taste, his liberality, and magnificence,—all were such as instantly to take with his lively friends; and his readiness to seize, with true diplomatic skill, the fortunate occasions that chance threw in his way, left no regret on the part of King or Minister, that the Earl had been accredited at the French Court.

We shall pass over this period, and merely observe, that, allowing for a little romantic colouring, the seizure of Cellamare's despatches is stated to have been made nearly under the came circumstances as those related in "Villiers," with this difference—that the two Spaniards, and the true Sir Joseph Hodges, who passed

horseback, and received the honours of a Prime Minister of Prance, which were little short of those by which a king is saluted. His horse becoming restrice at the firing, and the rider being unused to equitation, he was so shaken as to burst an internal abscess, of which he died on the following day. for an English nobleman, were overtaken near Poictiers instead of Chartres.

The hostilities with Spain, following the transactions which are truly and historically detailed in the novel, ceased after a short warfare. During this there had been fought a naval engagement, redounding much to the honour of Admiral Byng, as did all his unwearied operations in the Mediterranean, under very perplexing circumstances, where he had, in the early part, to act upon his own responsibility, and was left in doubt whether he would be borne out by the country in the constructions he might put upon his orders. Information of the Spanish Ambassador at the Hague having at length signed the quadruple alliance, was received by him, through the Earl of Stair, from Paris.

During Stair's mission to Paris an occurrence took place which, though grounded on a very trifle, furnished conversation for a week amongst all the gossips of the court; and in the perfect line drawn by the Earl, with his just concep-



sage to the Prince, to the effect, that the next time he had the honour of a visit from him, he should receive his Royal Highness in a similar manner; and that till such had been done, he could not any more call on the Prince, unless he expressed his intention of paying him the same honours as those he had himself received.

The Prince complained to the Regent; but Lord Stair was inflexible, and refused to visit him till he had instructions from his own Government. This did not settle the point for three or four months; when the British Ambassador being ordered to conform to the rules of the French Court, the Prince made the first visit, and was received as usual.

The intelligence from time to time which the English Government obtained of the Pretender's movements from this watchful and wary Minister, was of immense importance to George, in the precaution which he was thus enabled to take for the security of his throne*.

^{*} The Duke of St. Simon, with infinite nonchalance, in-

While Stair was performing his diplomatic duties abroad, the time of Lords and Commons was taken up at home with the settlement of Scottish affairs; and debates of the most violent order were daily and nightly carried on with all the vehemence of party spirit. A bill was brought in by the Duke of Somerset to restrain the Crown from exerting any further the prerogative of creating peers, and to alter the system with dulges in the most scandalous and injurious libel with regard to Lord Stair, whom he has accused of secretly favouring a plan for assassinating the Pretender. We may believe the Duke to have known little of the character of an English ambassador, or we may suppose that the grace into which the Earl was taken at court had the effect of rousing all the hatred of a supplanted rival in the breasts of Orlean's favourites; but we cannot know that this same Lord Stair was the esteemed and intimate friend of the amiable Prince of Wales in after-times, and place the slightest degree of confidence in so diabolical a slander.

Of a piece with this may be reckoned the old story of a Sir George Stair carrying his batred of the Stuarts so far as to have performed the executioner's part masked, at the death of Charles I. This ridiculous fable was trumped up in a "Life of Milord Stairs," says the French account from which it is taken, printed in 1743, and very scarce, on account of the disgence with which it was bought up by the Earl's family! The real headsman is well known to have been one Hugh Peters, who died in Barbadoes, 1671.

regard to Scottish peers that had been agreed on at the Union. This was intended, not as a tie upon the King, but as a restraint upon the Prince of Wales, then at variance with the Ministry. The motion was supported by the Duke of Argyle, and opposed by Lord Oxford; but the virulence with which senators assailed each other in either house proved that the question here, as in almost every other dispute, was not whether the measure proposed was advantageous, or the contrary, to the state, but whether the Whig or Tory interest should predominate in parliament. George the First died, and Stair was recalled from France.

Now was the time of the South Sea infatuation, and of the adventurer Law, who nearly ruined France with his Mississippian scheme.

"This is, of all others," says Smollett, "the most unfavourable era for an historian. A reader of sentiment and imagination cannot be entertained or interested by a dry detail of such transactions as admit of no warmth, no colouring, no

embellishment,-a detail which serves only to exhibit an unpleasing picture of tasteless vice and mean degeneracy." Taking such a hint, although not professing the craft of an historian, and, with the knowledge that the schemes of avarice and cupidity, which lured so many to their ruin at this season, were here to be understood, the compiler of this notice takes the occasion to overleap a few uninteresting years, m which Lord Stair was alternately in favour and disgrace at court, for the political part he played. His hours of retirement were spent in Scotland, as he loved to express himself, "at his plough," improving his lands, and breeding his grey galloways. He was not perhaps without some ambition to be thought a Cincinnatus, quite ready to devote himself to his country's service, either in the senate or the field, whenever she really stood in need. He had been liberal of his purse as his person, in supporting the interest of the Crown; but when conscience would not permit him to vote with the Ministry, he was invariably

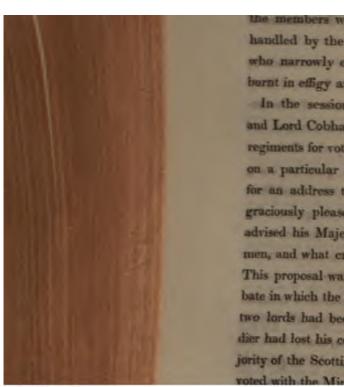
obnoxious to some mark of royal or ministerial displeasure.

In 1733* Stair returned from Warsaw, where he had for some time resided as Ambassador at the court of Augustus II.†, who died in this year; and parliamentary succeeded to diplo-

- * There is great perplexity of dates as to this embassy; French accounts giving it 1709, when Stair was taking towns from them in the Netherlands; others 1711-12; and another as above.
- † The great strength of Augustus is well known; neither need the story of the horse-shoe be here repeated: there is another anecdote told of him, which is, however, not generally known. On a certain occasion of his honouring the Ambassador with his company, he took up a silver plate that lay before him on the dinner-table, and folded it flat in two, as easily as if it had been a sheet of lead; then immediately apologised for his temporary fit of absence.

The King of Poland had a medal struck, with the figure of a Scotsman on the obverse, and a sword on the reverse, with this motto—Vis tandem inequalis, in allusion to the uncommon strength of a Highland servant of the Earl's, and the excellent temper of the blade, which he bent double—a feat that Augustus was unable to perform with his own.

Stair used to relate of the King's skill in hunting, that he would strike off the head of a deer, while in pursuit, at one blow. He declared that he preferred the stag-hunts and boisterous sports at Warsaw to all the gallantry and amusements of Versailles, in comparing the pleasures of these embassies.



handled by the mob who narrowly escaped burnt in effigy at West In the session of I and Lord Cobham has regiments for voting in on a particular questi for an address to the graciously pleased to advised his Majesty to men, and what crimes This proposal was reject bate in which the Duke two lords had been ren dier had lost his commis jority of the Scottish rep

several attempts were made by the lords in opposition, to prevent for the future the ministerial influence from extending itself to the elections of North Britain.

Two motions for this purpose were made by the Earl of Marchmont and the Duke of Bedford, and sustained by the Earls of Chesterfield, Winchelsea, and Stair, Lord Carteret, and others. They were opposed by the Dukes of Newcastle and Argyle. The question being put on both, they were defeated; and Lord Stair was deprived of his regiment of dragoons, after having performed the most signal services to the Royal Family, and exhausted his fortune in the support of their dignity and welfare.

In this year, 1734, was published a remarkable edict in France, commanding all British subjects, not actually in employment, from the age of eighteen to fifty, to quit the kingdom in fifteen days, or enlist in Irish regiments, on pain of being treated as vagabonds, and sent to the galleys. This edict was executed with the ut-

most rigour. The prisons of Paris were crowded with the subjects of Great Britain, who were surprised and cut off from all communication with their friends, and must have perished by cold and hunger, had they not been relieved by the active charity of the Jansenists.

This is of a piece with the abominable tyranny of Napoleon, who made détenus of our countrymen without a shadow of pretence for such an arbitrary measure, and in return for which we were, with the good nature and easy kindness of Englishmen, to have prevented him from going to St. Helena!

The dignity of the British nation had indeed sunk in the estimation of France, since the days in which Stair had commanded such respect for it. Lord Waldegrave, then minister at Versailles, made vigorous remonstrances, and the prisoners were released, while a second edict explained away the former one; but such a proceeding should have been timely prevented.

The parliamentary proceedings of this period

are enough to disgust and dishearten; and we can but lament that such eloquence as was displayed by the opposition in both houses, should have been tarnished with the charge of factious motives in its impulse,—a charge for which it is to be feared there was often but too much ground. From this imputation we must defend the Earl of Stair; as, in every active part he took, his heart was guided by a wish for the good of his country, the dignity of the crown, the liberty and well-being of the subject, and, in a word, the entire preservation of the British constitution.

In 1736 died the great military preceptor of Lord Stair, Prince Eugene; leaving behind him the character of an invincible hero and politician. He was not long survived by Count Staremberg, another Imperial general, who ranked next to the Prince in reputation as a soldier. Now followed the days of Broglio and Belleisle, of the great Frederick, and of

Count Saxe, whose genius, Adrian Duke of Nonilles afterwards advised Louis to call to his aid, as the only man who could save France.

In England, the differences which had for years subsisted between the King and the Prince of Wales, employed the speculation of all parties;—now accommodated and again renewed, it seemed that nothing but a change of ministry on the death of one party could lead to a permanent settlement. In 1741 the former of these happened, to the great relief and joy of the country, which had too long groaned under the monstrous misgovernment of Walpole.

The Duke of Argyle was gratified with the command of the army;—the Earl of Wilmington became a lord of the Treasury; Lord Carteret, Secretary of State; Mr. Sandys, Chancellor of the Exchequer; and the late minister, who acquitted himself with such admirable tact as to throw the popular odium from

himself to those who had opposed him, was raised to the peerage by the title of Earl of Orford.

The Duke of Argyle was soon disgusted with the turn affairs were taking, and, disappointed in his expectations of the coalition of discontented Whigs, with those of the Whigs who had held office, and the old patriots, he resigned his commands, and was succeeded by the Earl of Stair, who became a Field-Marshal, and was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary to the States-General.

The reconciliation between the King and the Prince of Wales that followed this change, caused great rejoicings throughout the country; while the political enemies in parliament met hand in hand, and all former heart-burnings appeared forgotten. But this harmony was of short duration. It soon appeared that those who had declaimed loudest for the liberties of their country, were actuated by the most sordid, and even the most ridiculous, motives of self-interest.

Jealmey and mutual distruct ensured between then and their confederates. The eloquen, but factious, opposition had no sooner themselves some into power, than they advanted the ten measures they had been at such pains to or down. The nation complained that, instead of a total change of men and measures, they say the old ministry strengthened by this coalines, and the same interest predominating in parisment with reducibled influence. They branded the new converts as apostates and betrayers of their country; and in the transports of their indignation, the people overlooked the old object of their resentment. In condemnation of Mr. Pulteney, who was now raised to the peerage, and who had been looked on as the delender of his country's liberties, they were loud and unmeasured; nor was Lord Carteret less severely stigmatized when they saw him entering, beart and hand, into the foreign policy of George, which he had so lately censured, with all the readiness that the Monarch could possibly desire. But it is time to quit the field of home politics, and follow Lord Stair in his diplomatic and warlike negotiations upon the continent.

Having already, in Villiers, sufficiently set forth the state of continental affairs, it would only serve to tire the reader did we go over the same ground. The various French generals having met with signal defeats and disasters, the Queen of Hungary suffered them not to rest, or to acquire new force; but, exerting all her energy, called upon her allies to make head against the common enemy. The gallantry of the King of Great Britain was too well seconded by his mania for continental warfare, to allow him to turn a deaf ear to this appeal. He informed the parliament that a peace had been concluded between the Queen of Hungary and the King of Prussia through his means, and that the late successes of the Austrian arms were in a great measure owing to the generous assistance of the British nation. The session of 1742 ended by a grant of five hundred thousand pounds to Her Hungarian Majesty, and the King, resolving to make a powerful diversion in the Netherlands, an army of sixteen thousand men was forthwith ordered for embarkation, of which the command was given to Lord Stair.

These troops, to which were added six thousand Hessians and Hanoverians, encamped, in October, near Brussels. The Earl repaired to Ghent, a body of Austrians was assembled, and it seemed that a blow was about to be struck; but the season being advanced, the army moved into winter-quarters, the Austrians retiring to Luxembourg, the English and Hessians remaining in Flanders, and the Hanoverians marching to the county of Liege, without paying any regard to the bishop's protestation.

We know not that the commander of the British is to be blamed for this latter arrangement. The States-General had made a considerable augmentation to their forces by sea and land; but notwithstanding the repeated instances of Lord Stair, they resolved to ad-

here to their original system of neutrality. They dreaded the neighbourhood of the French; and they were far from being pleased at seeing the English get footing in the Netherlands*.

War with Spain continued with very little credit to the English arms: the brilliant, but unimportant, achievement of Porto Bello had been succeeded by the deplorable expedition to Carthagena, where we can but lament that so much blood and so many gallant spirits were vainly sacrificed to the disagreement and culpable mismanagement of the two chiefs. Had the lamented Cathcart lived, the expedition might have had a far different result.

Vernon and Wentworth thought, however, that the country would expect something glorious at their hands after such a signal failure; they therefore planned a new undertaking, the capture of Panama. But the rainy and sickly season coming on when they reached Porto Bello, on their way thither, they called a council

of war, at which it was resolved to abandon the enterprise; when they returned to Jamaica, exhibiting, as the historian describes, "a ridiculous spectacle of folly and irresolution." Having done nothing during their naval campaign but take an insignificant island, Rattan, in the Bay of Honduras, the trade was but little better for all this vain parade of ships and soldiers; and the Spanish aggressions continuing unpunished, the merchants in England complained that their commerce was not protected, while the people clamoured against the conduct of the war. Their burthens, they said, were increased to maintain continental quarrels with which they had no concern, and to defray the enormous expense of inactive fleets and pacific armies. Lord Carteret had engrossed the whole direction of public affairs; the war with Spain had become a secondary consideration, and neglected accordingly; while the chief attention of the new minister was directed towards the continent. The dispute with Spain concerned Britain only;

the interests of Hanover were connected with all Europe: with these arguments he soothed his master, and opened a wider field to his own ambition. The intolerable taxes, the poverty, the ruined commerce of the country, the iniquity of a standing army, votes of credit, and foreign connections upon which he had so often expatiated, were now overlooked or forgotten. He set the power of France at defiance, and as if Great Britain had felt no distress, but teemed with treasure which she could not otherwise employ, he poured forth her millions with a rash and desperate hand, in purchasing beggarly allies and maintaining mercenary armies.

In addition to the national clamours about the misconduct of the West Indian warfare, there were not a few voices raised against the German predilections of the King, and the entertaining in the pay of England so many Hanoverian troops. Lord Sandwich took occasion in the house to speak with great contempt of the Electorate; and in discussing the Royal Family

seemed to forget the decorum which that subject demanded. Lord Stanhope, at the close of an elegant speech, had moved an address to the King, which led to such intemperate language, on the part of his seconder, and which purported to beseech and advise His Majesty, "that in compassion to the people, who were already loaded with such numerous and heavy taxes, and such a large and growing debt, he would exonerate his subjects of the charge of those mercenaries, &c." The motion was "hunted down," as Smollett observes, while the former patriots adopted the very language they had so lately condemned in Sir Robert Walpole. But the opposition had got into power,-the fish was caught, and they recollected the shrewd answer of the piscatory cardinal or pope, that there was no longer a necessity to spread the net: they had suddenly become illumined with more enlarged ideas; for place and power had the infallible effect of showing that these disinterested people were but men at last. The Commons,

however, granted supplies to the amount of six millions, and the war was prosecuted. The national debt continued to increase, the navy was as usual neglected, the English arms were inglorious, and Spain rode us with an iron hoof.

In April the King and Duke of Cumberland embarked for Germany, attended by Lord Carteret and other persons of distinction.

The Queen of Hungary seemed now to triumph over all her enemies. The French were driven out of Bohemia and part of the Upper Palatinate; and their forces under Maréchal Broglio were posted on the Danube. Prince Charles of Lorraine, at the head of the Austrian army, entered Bavaria, and obtained a victory at Branau; at the same time three bodies of Croats, penetrating through the passes of the Tyrolese, ravaged the whole country to the very gates of Munich. The Emperor pressed the French general to hazard a battle, but he refused to run the risk, although he had received a strong reinforcement from France. His Imperial Ma-

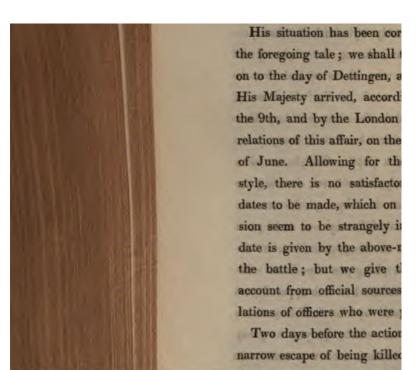
he was afterwards joi had been terribly hara the Austrian cavalry. treaty was entered into l Bavaria, and Count Kh of the Queen. The gov goldstadt refusing to ac which involved the delive like stores belonging to be found in these towns, course to the operations o were reduced. At Ingol the Emperor's domestic t pictures, &c., with the of Bavaria, and a vast provision, and military sto and Capua, and Veii, the cavalry fight at Regillus, the slaughters of Thrasymenus and Cannæ, are imprinted on our minds with a glowing vividness; but we defy the reader of the wars we have lately touched upon to peruse their details without a feeling of distaste. It is nevertheless impossible to open the theatre of operations in which England was now to be engaged, without some introduction; and we only stop here from the fear of disgusting those who have followed us so far, referring them to the history of the time for a fuller explanation of the reasons which George II., as Elector of Hanover, believed himself justified by when he took this active part in the quarrel.

In the spring of 1743 Lord Stair broke up his quarters in the Netherlands, and marched to the banks of the Rhine, when the army encamped near Hoesh. The English Field-Marshal now sent Major-General Bland with a polite message to the Emperor at Frankfort,

assuring him, in the name of His Britannic Majesty, that he should not be molested, or his dignity in the least violated. The Emperor, it seems, notwithstanding this guarantee, retired to Munich, though he was afterwards obliged to return, owing to the success of the Austrians in Bavaria. The French King, in order to prevent the junction of the British forces with Prince Charles of Lorraine, ordered Maréchal de Noailles to assemble sixty thousand men upon the Maine; while Coigny was sent into Alsace with a numerous army to defend that province, and oppose Prince Charles, should he attempt to pass the Rhine. De Noailles having secured the towns of Spires, Worms, and Oppenheim, passed the Rhine in the beginning of June, and posted himself on the east side of that river above Frankfort.

Stair advanced towards him, and again encamped at Killenbach, from whence he moved to Aschaffenburg, with a view to secure the

navigation of the Upper Maine; but he was anticipated by the enemy, who lay on the opposite bank of the river, and who had taken possession of the posts above, so as to intercept all supplies. Here it were to be wished that we could avail ourselves of the Earl's account of this campaign; but in the absence of any documents but those which have been many years back laid before the public, though now forgotten, we can only lament our inability to explain the reasons, doubtless good ones, for the apparent absence of foresight or usual good generalship, in thus allowing himself to be outmanœuvred in the taking up a position. He was certainly outnumbered, and hampered probably with the counsel and intractability of his confederates; add to which, he was in daily expectation of the King, who was certain to alter the plan of the campaign, whatever it might be, in order to show that he would be master. But we have never had a satisfactory explanation of the measures, or rather the want



prised, is said to have displayed the most admirable coolness and courage, and effected his retreat in masterly style with his escort.

Bridges had been, during the night of the 25th, thrown across the Maine by the French. By day-break the whole of the allied army, having broken up from their camp at Aschaffenburg, were on the march towards Hanau.

About eight o'clock Captain Halliburton, who had been out with a patrol of horse, observed the enemy also in motion, and reported the same to Lord Stair. The allied army was halted; a battery in a chapel on the opposite side of the river soon began to play upon the Hanoverian cavalry near Hoeshstadt, and was opposed, and after a time silenced, by the British artillery planted by Lord Stair, who displayed the greatest bravery, sitting on his horse unharmed amidst the fire. Aschaffenburg, in the rear, was now taken possession of by the enemy. In front of the allies a line of French infantry made a demonstration, and soon after a second line extend-

ing increase Detingen and Webbiers, towards for manning, and two estimute of horse appeared marking the same way; "so that," says the account of an officer, " our front being to the rises, the French army, at half a mile distant, was upon our right flank. The danger was make and pressing, and His Majesty ordered the Generals to make our front immediately assents the enemy."

The finglish army was thus led

Generals Clayton and Somerfeldt commanded the first line of minutery, the Earls of Durmore and Rathes the second; Generals Honeywood, Campbell, and Ligamer the first line of carelry; Generals Cope and Halley the second; D'Arenberg and Noesperg commanded the allies. Stair was musplemous on the right upon a dapple gas gallower, of his own breaking, and near the person of George. At this time the gallout mobiles are securely years old, but he was equally predigal of his own life as he seemed aminous to save that of the King, who, with a like

courage, resolutely withstood the entreaties of the Earl that he would remove to a less exposed situation.

The French were superior in artillery. The action commenced with a vigorous cannonade on both sides. De Grammont having been stationed to keep the defile before named, with all the young noblesse and princes, and the household troops of France, contrary to the orders of Noailles, quitted his post, and advanced without beat of drum or sound of trumpet, under cover of the smoke from the guns. The batteries ceased; there was a dead silence; nothing being heard but the tramp of an immense body of slowly-advancing cavalry. The allied army now got a sight of the enemy, and raised "a dreadful huzza." Between them there was only a morass, which the impetuous De Grammont passed, and advanced, says the account, so close to the first line of infantry, that the colour of the men's eyes could be distinguished. Here they halted a few moments;

but on the tossing of a lash, the signal agreed on, the body of horse broke furiously into the left of the British infantry, which had opened about eighteen yards to receive them. Some of that line were cut down (this we think very probable from such a novel manœuvre as receiving cavalry in line), but the remainder closing in, the enemy were soon thrown into confusion. So closely engaged were they that the muzzles of the men's muskets pressed against the sides of the horses as they opened their fire. Such of the French as escaped through the intervals, were met by the Hanoverians in the second line, and by the Austrians in the third, who fired full in their faces. The slaughter was immense. The Black Musqueteers, a chosen regiment of horse, not finding an opening, rode at a gallop along the British line, but raised a terrible fire as they passed, and were totally annihilated by the Scots Greys*, and their stan-

^{*} There was also a French regiment of Greys in the field, the Mousquetaires gras.

dard taken by a serjeant of Hawley's dragoons at the right of the whole line. The Cornet who carried it was early killed; but being buckled to his horse, the dead body was carried along by the frightened animal till thus stopped. The standard was of white satin, embroidered with gold and silver, the device a sheaf of arrows, bound with a wreath, and the motto "Alterius Jovis, altera Tela," very handsome, &c., but much stained with blood. Several other splendid standards were taken, of various colours and devices.

The French infantry now came up to the support of their comrades, and a sustained and destructive fire took place on both sides. The Blues were sent to General Clayton to prevent the enemy from flanking him on the side of the river. The young horses could not be brought to face the tremendous fire of grape and musketry that was opposed to them, and were put to flight. This, says the account, struck a damp into some of the Generals; but Stair said, "there

must be some mistake here; I will bring back the Blues;" and, galloping after them, he soon rallied this fine regiment, and rode at their head to the charge, which they now made in most gallant style. The King's dragoons suffered severely in maintaining the defile, as we have before stated.

The firing lasted about two hours between the opposing lines of infantry. The French then gave a shout, and prepared to advance, but they were not supported by the remaining horse, and the allies returned a louder cheer. The enemy now formed a hollow square, and endeavoured to retreat; but it was impossible for their chiefs to keep the troops in this order, and, notwithstanding their utmost efforts, the whole body was soon mingled in a general flight. The self-devotion of the French officers was in keeping with their usual gallantry. They threw themselves before them, implored, entreated, menaced, even killed some, but mostly in vain; the panic could not be overcome. The Hano-

verian artillery was now brought up, and played upon these miserable victims, as they tried to ford the river, or crowded upon the bridges, one of which broke down, where hundreds were drowned.

Voltaire gives a list of several princes and noblemen who distinguished themselves on this occasion, and who fell in the retreat. "Le Marquis de Puysegur," says he, "parlait aux soldats de son régiment, courait après eux, ralliait ce qu'il pouvait, et en tua de sa main quelques uns qui ne voulaient plus lui suivre, et qui criaient 'sauve qui peut! Les Princes et les Ducs de Biron, de Luxembourg, de Boufflers, de Chevreuse, de Pequigny, se mettaient à la tête des brigades qu'ils rencontraient, et s'enfoncaient dans les lignes ennemis."

He relates an affecting instance of firmness in the young Count de Boufflers de Remiencourt, a boy of ten years old, whose leg was broken by a cannon-ball.

" Il réçut le coup (de canon), se vit couper vol. III.

la junie, et mourat avec un égal sangiroid. Tunt de jeunesse et tant de courage attendrirent tous onur que furent témoins de son mollors?

The French household troops seem to have suffered tremendously. Voltaire states that, "Fingt-orpt officiers de la maison du Roi, à cheral, perirent dans ce combat, et soirante-siz furent dangereutement blessés."

The same author avers, that George II. was run away with at the commencement of the action, and carried nearly into the enemy's ranks; after which he dismounted, and fought on foot. He is said to have worn a Hanoverian scarf on this day—a circumstance that was afterwards considered of sufficient importance to adduce in parliament, in evidence of his partiality for the German troops, to the disparagement of the British.

The French retired upon Selingenstadt. To their great surprise and joy, George sought to reap no further benefit from his victory than

that of escaping into Hanau; and the retreat from his discomfited enemy was made with such precipitation, that the wounded were left to his care. The Gazette gives the number of killed and wounded of the allies at 2,380*. The French loss is stated at about 5,000, but was probably more. Mutual civilities passed between the Duc de Noailles and Lord Stair; the latter sending some badly wounded French officers back to their friends in his state-coach: all prisoners were in fact exchanged. On the 30th of June, Stair wrote the following note:-"J'ai renvoyé tous les prisonniers Français dont j'avais connoisance, et j'ai donné ordre de relacher ceux qui etoient entre les mains des Hanoveriens. Vous me permettrez de vous remercier de vos manières généreuses d'agir, lesquelles sont conformés aux sentiments que j'ai toujours fait profession d'avoir pour M. le Duc de Noailles. Je vous rends

^{*} Amongst the latter was the Duke of Cumberland, who received a musket-ball through the calf of his leg.

graces, Monsieur, du soin que vous avez pris de nos blessés*."

Lord Stair meeting Voltaire some weeks after, was asked his opinion of Dettingen. "I think," said Stair, "that you committed one fault and we two; yours was passing the ravine,—et de me savoir pas d'attendre; les deux notres ont été de nous mettre d'abord un risque d'être perdus, et ensuite de n'avoir pas profité de la victoire."

Handel composed on this occasion the sublime Dettingen 'Te Deum.'

The splendid advantages which might have been acquired from the victory were vainly flung away by George, who, believing that enough was done in rescuing his army from impending destruction, allowed it to remain torpid during the rest of the campaign. The King held a court at Hanau on the 16th of July. He was attended by Lord Holdernesse, as Lord of the Bed-chamber, and waited on by several persons

[·] Voltaire.

of distinction, who came to pay their respects, amongst whom were Prince Charles of Lorraine, attended by Marshal Khevenhuller, Princes Esterhazy, William Frederick of Hesse, Count Nieuperg, Stair, and a great many generals and noblemen, who the next day went to a review of the army in its encampment, returning to the castle of Hanau. Prince Charles dined with the King on the following day, and set off for the Austrian camp in the Margraviate of Dourlach. Lord Stair seems to have entertained liberally and sumptuously while the troops remained in the neighbourhood of Frankfort. The Austrians under D'Aremberg and Nieuperg marched, August 4th, to pass the Rhine near Mayence. The British and Hanoverians followed on the next day. On the 8th of August the army encamped near Biberich; passed the Rhine on the 23d, and again encamped at the Chartreux, near Mentz.

We hear little further of George's employments, or of the occupations of Lord Stair, that are worthy of notice during the remainder of the season. The disagreements of these two heads of the army became more frequent, as the King refused to listen to the proposals of the latter for active movements. The allies in September moved successively to Worms and Spires; but nothing of importance was done or resolved on. In the middle of October George led them back to Worms, when the projected attack of the French lines near Landau being given up, as we have already stated in Villiers, the British army marched for Flanders, to take up its winter-quarters, where it arrived in November. The King had previously departed for England, as also Lord Stair, taking the Hague in his way, by the Sovereign's directions, whence he was officially congedié.

The coolness which succeeded between the King and Stair did not prevent the latter from offering his services in the following year, on the appearance of disturbances in Scotland. These were graciously accepted, and the Earl was invested with the command of all the forces in South Britain. He was also restored to the command of his regiment, the Scots Greys, which had, we believe, a third time been taken from him.

The Earl married Eleanor, fourth daughter of James Campbell, Earl of Loudon, by whom he had no issue.

In 1747, a short time before his death, he executed a deed, surrendering his titles to the Crown, and obtained a new charter to the heirs male of his body; or failing such, to the person or persons descended of the first Viscount whom he might appoint, and failing such nomination, to the second son of his next brother, William, with other remainders. This created afterwards some confusion with regard to the title, two Earls of Stair claiming it, and voting at the election of representative peers; but the House of Lords decided in 1748 against the legality of the second Earl's settlement. He died May 9th, 1747, aged seventy-four.

We must here close our imperiest narrative of this great man's life, doubting not that very many associates have been left untold, which would reduced to the reputation of his wit, his taken, his homour, and his various strates. If we have failed to recount his failes, we have only this to offer in defence of the seeming partiality—namely, that we never heard them.

THE END.

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